







### Horizon Beyond

"You will need this pair of crutches when you walk again," he said to me, and then he went away, leaving me in the loneliness of the room, and I was about to answer him, but when I looked up, he was not there. My heart was sad, and I couldn't find words to say, and I looked then out of the window, toward horizons beyond.

Far away, over the hills, beyond the white clouds there is a make-believe land, a place of beauty and song where often I go, and there in the calmness of solitude, my mind forget all ugliness of earth and space. There, I am able to breathe in the fragrant perfume of delicate flowers, where I could see the silk bubbles of clear water on emerald lakes, where the air is clear and bright as if distilled. There are green hills and orange flowers, clear blue water, and yellow leaves. Oh, land beyond, if only I could feel the beauty that is yours, to lie in the naked bosom of your breast for always.

I sit up in my bed, and look out far toward distant space, and there is a beauty everywhere, in horizon beyond. Below me, under my window there is filth and ugliness, and the bad smell of rotting garbage comes up into my room, and disturbs the fresh fragrant air now and then. I hear the voices of boys and girls gaily playing in the sun, the tramping of running feet, feet that walk and jump and skip. How my







very soul long to talk with them, to be one of them. Alas, my heart cries within me, for when, when if ever again shall I walk once more?

Oh, hills beyond, come closer that I may see you and feel you, to know you, to grasp you in my imagination. There is a reality I know, a sincere feeling that there is a place beyond in distant land where I wander and walk in dreams of long ago.

Can it be true that outside this window there are people still alive, not stagnant and rotting in weariness and pain. Ah, I was like that too, long ago, but now it is a dream, a distant dream which comes before me vaguely, and I am lost, lost, for always? I do not know.

My only comfort is to gaze far away where purple hills stand so <sup>serenely</sup> ~~serenely~~ in majestic silence, where white clouds are like jewels in the sky. There is a horizon beyond I walk once more, there I wander up paths to mountain tops, there I lie in <sup>the</sup> softness of mother earth. I drink the cool water of mountain stream, and I feel the soft touch of the wind's caressing fingertips. Ah, it is so wonderful, so exotic, does such a land still exist? Is it still there? Or is it all an empty dream of nothing, shattered to pieces?

Yes, this is a world of pain and suffering, and I have been through it all, all the sensations of futility, of hopelessness, pain, torture, with no more gladness but the everlasting weeping of something so gray, so gray. What are these blank walls around me, so white, so white, and the bed, the sheet? How I long to see some bright flowers here.







All day, all night, I smell the ever rotting garbage, and my body and mind sicken with weariness. How long has it been that I have been lying here? Is it only just a few short years? Alas~~h~~, what long centuries it seem, and I have died a thousand deaths, lived a thousand lives, each one, still so clear, so precise, within me. How can I forget, how can I?

There are times when the feeling of depression comes suddenly over me, and I feel that what use is it to go<sup>on</sup> in the world, what use, and I would look out the window to hills far away, and my mind becomes cool once more, and my eyes are able to visualize a land of peace and rest. My heart then leaps within me, my pulse jumps, and I am sad no more. Oh, those moments are so short, and I am once again flooded with depression and worries.

If I could only walk again, but my feet are numb, and there is no more feeling. When, oh when am I to walk again?

I can see the street below me, and I spend long hours gazing at boys and girls, so happy, so carefree. Can it be possible that once I too, was one of them. It cannot be, it cannot be, so far away, so unreal. But yet I remember distinctly once walking through these same streets, with these two same legs, yes, my two legs. I jump, I run, I skip, I had two legs then, two real legs, and now even though the legs are still here, I cannot walk anymore. I lie in bed day after<sup>day</sup>, wondering, thinking again of lost days of long







ago. And sometimes, yes, sometimes, I think that death is better than going on like this. But I don't want to die, not now while I am so young and helpless. I want to live awhile ~~awhile~~ yet. Life seems so short sometimes, and yet so very long.

I cry often to myself, in the silence of my room, and then, unable to stand my sadness, I think of hills and lands in distant horizon. I see the bright sun rising every morning, like a golden ball, so beautiful, so beautiful. I cannot express my emotion in these ~~for~~ supreme moments of joy. Sometimes, there is such simple beauty that I want to cry, seeing the sun rising up into the sky, and I would forget about my legs and that I am unable to walk. I only know that it is another day, and while there is light, there is hope for me and everyone. When the sun hides behind the clouds on gray dull days, I feel melancholy and could see no more the gladness of the earth.

My friends come to see sometimes. They always tell me how well I look, but how could they know what is in the dept of my heart, in my mind. I look fine, but my body is dead to all sense, and my mind is numb with worries. Yes, because I am a cripple, and my legs are no use to me now.

Oh, the futility of it all. Is life always like this? Why can I not have one short moment of peace and rest and ease my weary body in the coolness of the earth, to forget for the moment, this moment what sadness is.

How often have I looked to far horizon, in escape, and see the golden sunset amidst the heaven, sinking behind the hills.







I see the last ray of golden sunlight among the leaves of tall dark trees, the blade of grass in shadowlight. I see the rippling of water in emerald lakes. Then when the ~~sun~~ sun sinks finally into the distant hills, dipping beyond the horizon, I go back again to the world of reality and pain. Gone, gone, are the trees, and lakes too, and hills too. They are like a sudden mirage that vanishes quickly away, and I am lonely once more

Oh hills, the land beyond, do not leave me in the lonely night, stay with me and comfort me, and make me forget the dark night that is to come. Hours are so long, and life is short, so short. And tomorrow is such a long way off.

The dark night is coming, and I am afraid. It is so long and tedious, always haunting and ominous, and sometimes I see devils and images of grotesque figures, the long parade of cripples, of poor broken down bodies, and the leering skull of phosphorus skeletons, the rattling of white bones, and I heard the loud song of the falling night. Tomorrow may never come again. Alas, the night, the night, must you always haunt me? In flander fields the crosses grow row on row, and poppies are white and pale, for all blood has sunk to the interior of the earth to dye the bones of mortal red.

There is rumbling beneath the graves, and volcanoes are erupting in swirling lava, flowing upwards toward land to drown away all happiness and joy. Rats are munching the dead flesh of bodies, and there are noise and more noise in the darkness of the earth.





The years of long ago come once again, drifting toward me like phantom ghosts, and I am caught in the maelstrom of dreams and more dreams. Oh, to be dead and finished forever, never again to suffer, never again.

The dark night is like a heavy eerie shadow, fantastic, clamoring for light and day. How often have I sat in the ~~obscurity~~ <sup>obscurity</sup> of night, just thinking, and during these strange moments, I am like a person dead, who is unreal, and I say to myself, Oh, when, oh, when, will I be able to walk again? Tears come into my eyes. In the distance, I hear the laughter of boys and girls, the sound of marching feet. Can I not be one of them? What is there for me now, a hopeless invalid, what? what? if indeed there is any hope. Ah, it is a sad world, a sad world that people shall suffer like this.

Come laughter, come to me once again, so that I may be able to forget all sadness. Ring loudly in my ears so that I may be able to forget all this stillness of the wailing night. How dark the night is, so black and still. How strange the hills appear in the sky. Yes, night is death itself, and I am having a rendezvous with death, and I am afraid. Will not the sun shine anymore for me?

Hills beyond, distant horizon, come back to me, come back. Oh, such hush, such hush of the lonely night, no sound but the rattling of skeleton bones, the leering of phosphorus skulls in the shadowy light.

Morning is such a long way off, and while it is coming, I must pass my time with ghosts and spirits around me.





How I long for the morning light, to see once again the golden sun slowly creeping over the mountain tops. I look out the window again and again. How a change there is in the night. It seems like another world, another age.

Then slowly the dawn begins to come, and darkness falls away. A thin light streaks across the horizon, then the sun creeps up, rising up to the heavens. The purple hills come forth, and horizon beyond comes again into view. Night is away, like the wind, it's gone.

Hear once more the merry laughter of children in the street. I can hear the sound of running feet, stamping, jumping over the place. How I long to be down there, among the flesh and blood, to be able to ~~shout~~ shout again, I can walk, I can walk, look, look at my legs, I can walk again.

Horizon beyond, so far away, and yet so near. It is a place where I wander daily, a secluded spot of enchantment where I am able to feel once more the glorious feeling that is life. Where I feel once again the surging force of strength and vitality. It is there where I have a secret communication with myself, where I see the daily life of people with a <sup>different</sup> ~~different~~ view. Then I know that life is not so bad, and when I come back to the reality of this world, that feeling is lost, and I am melancholy again.

Oh, the sadness of it all, if I can only forget.

This little room, my only world, and outside my window still another, and still another in horizon beyond. Yes,





over the hills there is a little world where I often go, and while there my soul and mind will forget all ugliness of the earth. There in horizon beyond, far away, I walk again. There for one short moment ~~##~~ I am alive, and I walk and breathe again. Distant horizon, land of imagination, my only hope.

"You will need this pair of crutches when you walk again," he said to me. I look at the crutches, and I begin to cry. When I look out the window again, the hills are there no more.

Horizon beyond has faded into nothingness.





It was the heat of the Sahara...the temperature of the equator...the fire of hell...the taste of tabasco...the steam of a Turkish bath.

There were faces, faces dead, blue, pale and familiar. There were strange persons, tall, short, frail, strong. There were voices loud and soft, harsh and kind. There were nightmares of horses, kings, trees, bicycles.

There was a room, small and cold. The wallpaper was browned by time. On the wall hung a picture frame without any picture. The lights were turned low. And he, the boy, was turning and tossing.

The white sheet on the bed...the high pillow...the bottle of cough medicine...the hot water bottle...the nurse, so calm...the doctor speaking...his mother softly crying...the fever, rising, rising.

He turned and he turned. The fever was rising.

He heard the clattering of dishes. He heard his sister crying. He heard water running in the sink. He heard the door being opened and being shut. He heard everything and yet he seemed to not hear anything. The lights blurred. The white sheet faded away. The room turned and whirled and he turned with it. The sounds were gone. There was a ringing in his ears and he felt hot. Very hot.





"Oh, doctor, is he all right?" Then a face. "Oh, doctor!" Then another face. A familiar face. "Is he...?" Another face. The room was on fire. Flames darted from all sides. The walls were burning. Crumpling into ashes.

Dan was asleep in his room. He felt the sting of smoke in his nose. The room was dark. It was just before dawn and everything was dark. He woke up. He saw red flames in his room. The walls were on fire. He jumped out of bed, reached for his robe. He woke his brother, still asleep in the bed beside his.

"Dennis, Dennis, wake up! Fire! Hurry!"

Dennis yawned and mumbled. Suddenly he jumped up. "Fire!" He ran from the room, putting on his clothes as he ran. Dan called to him, "Wake father and mother and I'll wake Helen."

The flames were spreading rapidly through the house. The coal oil in the kitchen stove had caught fire and was burning brightly. The oilcloth on the kitchen wall was burning too.

Dan knocked at his sister's door. There was no response. The door was locked. He knocked again. He broke in the door. Helen was asleep, half-suffocated by the smoke. Quickly he took her into the open air. His father, mother, Dennis were there. All were safe.

Suddenly Dan cried out, "My dog, I forgot my dog." He rushed back into the house, a blazing furnace now. "Don't, Dan. Come back, Dan!" But Dan heard no one. He rushed





into the house. To him the house was not on fire. He must save his dog. The walls were in flames. The ceiling was falling in. A great beam crashed down. It fell just two inches from him. The beam missed him by just two long inches.

He heard Tarzan barking wildly upstairs. "Tarzan, I'm coming!" He went up the burning stairs, two steps at a time. The stairs collapsed as he reached the top. He saw the dog. His hair was afire.

With his hands Dan slapped out the fire which was burning his dog to death. "Oh, Tarzan, Tarzan," he moaned. And the dog barked and wagged his burned tail. "Come, Tarzan, let's get out." He gathered the dog in his arms. The front stairs had fallen. He could not go down that way. He ran to the back stairs. They too, had collapsed and he could not go down that way either.

He called from the window, "Dennis, I'm here at the back. Get me out of here! I'm burning! Hurry!" But no one seemed to hear him. There was no one in the yard. The people next door were still asleep. "Where is everyone?" he muttered. He called again and still there was no answer. He could not understand why. He was in the burning house and no one seemed to care. There were no fire engines insight, no spectators anywhere. He did not understand.

Smoke came into the room. The dog in his arms whined and died. Dan was choking. "Help! Help!" He coughed.





He could not see anything now. The smoke was too thick. He could hardly breathe. He tried to yell, but could make no sound. He slumped down on the burning floor. He heard the roar of the fire. He felt the heat. "I'm burning!", he screamed. Then he was quiet. He was burning. His flesh became black and shriveled.

There was no fire. And he was not burned. It was hot. Gazing about him he saw miles of white sand. Mile after mile of sand. Nothing else.

In a little, crowded town he saw many Arabs. And many, many camels. One of them looked at him and he thought that the face of the camel resembled that of someone he knew. Who, he could not tell. The faces of the Arabs were strange. They appeared black in contrast to the Arabs' white robes. Some of the men were preparing for a journey across the desert. They were packing food and equipment. Once Dan thought he saw his brother Dennis among them, but when he looked again, he was gone and Dan was puzzled.

He found himself with those who were going across the desert. The sun was blazing and the wind was hot. The sea of sand rolled toward the distance. Nothing could be seen but endless desert.

The caravan moved slowly across the white, hot sand. Dan felt as if he were walking on fire, so hot was the sand. Slowly, but steadily they went on. The glare blinded him. His eyes were burning and his head felt as if it would burst.





Once he thought that he was going to faint. He could not stand it. Yet hour after hour he walked on. He was too tired to walk any longer. Faces of Arabs moved before him. How strange they were. So ugly.

He fell. The heat of the sand seeped through his clothes. Into his flesh and bones. He tried to stand, but could not. He called to the Arabs, but camels and Arabs were gone. They had disappeared. He looked about and saw nothing but the ever-rolling white sands of the Sahara.

He was lost in the ocean of sand. Which way should he go? The sun grew hotter and hotter. Still hotter. The wind grew in velocity. It howled and it moaned. Sand swirled into the air. Dan was caught in the center of the storm. The hot sand and wind burned him like tongues of searing fire. He could not see in the fog of flying sand. He heard the howling of the wind and felt the bite of the hot sand. He felt and knew nothing else. So furiously the wind blew that he breathed only with difficulty. Once or twice he felt that he could breathe no more.

His throat was parched and dry. He longed for water. But all he saw was sand and, sometimes, the sky. The thundering storm gathered up its strength into one great breath. It almost split Dan's eardrums.

Then, quickly as it had come, the storm was gone. Before him Dan saw palm trees. Water and dates and a place for shelter. He felt he was dying from thirst, so dry was his throat. He went toward the palm trees. But he was





unable to reach them. There they were, just a few feet away, yet when he went forward he was no closer to them. He walked faster. The same thing happened. Despite his fatigue, he ran. Faster and faster he ran. The water and shelter seemed to recede more and more. He was panting for breath. His throat became so dry he could stand it no longer. He grew weak and dazed. He fell on the sand and drowsed away...the soft music of guitars came to his ears.

Palm trees lined the streets. The sun was shining. He saw men in huge sombreros, with bright shawls thrown over brown shoulders. There were girls. With long, dark lashes. Their hair was shining black and very long and smooth. Dan entered a cafe. There was dancing. Hips swayed and he saw knowing looks pass between men and women.

He was dying with hunger and thirst. He sat at a table and ordered food. The dishes they brought him were red-hot. A glass of water. He drank and gasped for breath...tabasco sauce. His eyes were burning. He felt hotter and hotter.

When he opened his eyes again he was in a Turkish bath. He was undressed. Steam rose on all sides. There were many men. Wrapped in their long towels, they reminded him of the Arabs. He was lost in the desert again. Then he was in a Turkish bath with many other men.

Suddenly he felt cold. Icy water ran down his back. He was under a cold shower. Then he was hot. He was under a hot shower. Cold. Then hot. He was hot and cold.





Hot and cold. Steam blinded him as the desert sand had done. He was afraid again.

Naked bodies of men. Tall, short, white, yellow. Bodies brushed against his. He heard men plunging into pools of cool water. He heard showers falling, falling. Still the steam rose. Suddenly he was under a hot shower. Boiling water ran down his back. Hotter, hotter.

He was in hell. It was raining fire, showers of fire, glaring, red. Devils with tails rushed back and forth, carrying the nude bodies of men and women which they hurled into pits of black, bubbling tar. Their tormented screams and yells chilled his soul. A devil with a burning torch in his long, thin hands, thrust the screaming victims under the boiling tar. The odor of burned flesh sickened Dan.

Red devils, black devils, green devils came into view, blazing torches in their hands. Fire shot from their eyes. They were looking at Dan. They were coming toward him. "Death," they chanted, "Death, death." They drew closer, closer, still closer. "Death," they yelled. "Death." His clothes were in flames. His hair was burning, his flesh. Dan screamed. He writhed and screamed. He was burning.

He was in the jungles of the Amazon. Savage faces peered through the bushes and vines. Naked warriors were watching him. Mosquitoes swarmed about him, stinging his blistered body. There were drums and spears and painted faces. A warrior seized him and led him before a chief.



Water bubbled in a great bowl. Dan was being undressed. Hands felt his flesh and washed his body with hot water. With a yell he was thrown into the air. Down, down he fell into the great bowl of boiling water. His body was being boiled.

The voice of Tarzan came to his ears. His room was on fire. Dennis was there. His father. His mother. Helen. He heard the siren of a fire engine. The splash of water. He saw firemen. Blazing shingles fell on the spectators in the street. An injured fireman was carried down a ladder. Tarzan barked. The caravan moved slowly into the distance, Arabs riding on their camels. He saw them from far away. He drank from the spring under the palm trees. His throat was no longer parched. A woman's voice was singing a Spanish song and dancers glided by. He drank and he drank. The water in the shower was freezing. He shivered. The fires of hell had died away. He smelled burning flesh no longer. He was swimming in a pool of cool water.

A face. Then another. And another. "Oh, doctor, is he all right?" Voices. "Oh, doctor!" Another face.

It was a small room. The wallpaper was browned by age. The lights were turned low. And he, the boy, was sleeping. He did not turn nor toss. He was sleeping quietly now. Before he moaned and tossed. Now he slept quietly.

The white sheet on the bed...the high pillow...the bottle of cough medicine...the hot water bag...the nurse,





so calm...the doctor watching...his mother softly praying...  
the fever dropping, dropping.

It was quiet. The boy opened his eyes. He had passed  
the crisis. Now he could get well.

The doctor said, "For a while I was afraid...the fever...  
but slowly it fell."

The mother prayed on silently. The boy slept.





John Lee's Original Stories



Jonh Leyim (Jon Lee)  
334 Fifth Street  
Oakland, Calif.

A sketch

### When the Sky Turns Blue

Darkness had fallen long ago, and the long road to Vallejo stretched, dark and obscure, far into the distance. The open land was large, immense, the black rolling hills loomed up like small giants in the distant horizon. Up above the stars glittered with sparkling brightness. The automobile hummed with a rhythmic silence, smooth and musical.

Riding in the car, I felt a strange and uncanny silence in the sleeping land. I leaned my head out of the window, peered out into the road. I could see the lights of an oncoming automobile. It came whizzing by, then it was gone, and everything was silent again.

The land was empty and barren, and the large silver tanks of Richmond could be seen, glittering and shiny, as it caught the reflection of the moon. The black hills leaned against the dark sky, deep and mysterious.

My brother drove on, his eyes straight on the road.

"Are you sure this is the right road?" he asked me.

"I guess so," I said, "I remember going into Vallejo six years ago, and this is the road we took."

My brother Sung remained quiet, and he said no more.

The land, the trees, the hills went by, and still we were on the open land. The road, turned, twisted, revolved around.

Two cars went by, and passed us.

The night air gushed into the automobile, and I drew a deep breath, inhaling fully. The air out here in the open



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was different from the stale city air.

I glanced up at the sky again. It was a deep dark blue, the bright stars twinkling like myriads of lights. Far away where the horizon met the sky, the sky was a lighter shade. I could see lights of a distant city, and once my brother Sung asked, "Is that Vallejo?"

"Mayber," I said, hardly knowing whether it was or not. But we drove on.

I had nothing to do, and I did not know how to drive a car. My brother opened the radio in the car, and listened to some music.

My eyes went once more to the sky, and I had <sup>an</sup> inner and deep feeling to capture the intangible feeling into words. I thought, "I like to write a story about the sky, and how it affects me on this night."

On and on we rode, with lights to the east, lights to the west. Far away, I caught an image of a bridge, and I knew that we were on the right road.

My brother Sung drove across the bridge very rapidly, and I looked down into the water below. We were riding high up, and the cold water was menacingly cold to look at. We crossed the bridge, and once more came upon a long sandy road with tall grotesque trees on both sides of the road.

The sky here seemed to have lost its mysterious beauty, and take on the appearance of an ordinary city sky, ordinary and common. The tall trees blocked the scenery from sight, and I sat back on the comfortable automobile's chair, and listened to the radio.





A violin was playing, "The Land of the Sky Blue Water."

Somehow I had a desire then and there to write about the sky and the blue water beneath the high bridge.

We reached Vallejo very soon, and after a little difficulty, we found Marine Street, and in big neon sign we saw the New China Cafe.

My brother Sung blew the horn of the car loudly and Godmother came out. She was near-sighted and could not tell who we were. Coming close she said, "Well, why did you come in so late?"

My brother Sung said, "This is the only time we could come."

I saw a sign on the window, Saturday, closed at 4 A.M.

This was a Saturday, and we had a few hours to chat and talk.

Godmother showed us to a back room in the restaurant, and she made chow mein for both of us.

"Why didn't your mother come in?" she said.

"She didn't want to bring the small children," I said.

"Tell your mother to come in when she has time," Godmother said.

The New China Cafe was doing good business tonight and Godfather had no time to talk to us. He was busily making chow mein, noodles, hamburgers, and other food.

I watched with interest.

He said to me, "Since you are writing stories, why don't you write a story about a hamburger."

We all laughed loudly,



"Maybe I will," I answered.

"Are you still writing stories?" Godmother asked me.

"Yes," I said.

"You are very fortunate," she said, "having a job like that."

"Many times I felt like giving it up," I said, "only my brother Sung needs the money to go to school."

Just then the customers began to come in, one after another, and Godmother had to help with the work. We had no more time to talk anymore.

Godmother's son, Edwin, came in the back room, and talk with us for awhile.

He brought three bottles of orange crush, and we drank it quickly. The time passed quickly, and soon it was three a.m.

"We must go back to Oakland," I told Godmother.

"Must you go?" Godmother asked.

"We come in some other time," I said.

My brother drove the car away, and Godmother waved to us.

Once more we were on the open road. The sky now was pale blue, almost light. It was early dawn. Far in the distance the sky was bright like morning, and in the middle of the sky, it was still black like night.

There were more cars on the road now..

Gradually the sky turned blue, very fast and rapid, uncanny. I had never seen the coming of dawn in the open land, and I could not believe that at three the sky could





begin to be morning. The hush of night gave way to morning, and stars disappear rapidly, fading away into nothingness.

The sky began with a light blue in the horizon, streaked with pale yellow, then darkened into a deep black in the core of the sky. This blackness turned to a dark blue, then a lighter shade, as we went on toward Oakland. The light of morning ~~it~~ was like a soft glowing halo which surrounded the countryside with its soft light.

The hills changed from a inky black to a dark purple, and I could see the distinct outlines of trees, silhouetted against the sky.

Dawn was breaking, and nights fall away. A silence strange and glowing surged through me, and I was awed just at the simple coming of dawn. I never knew how beautiful the coming of light could be. The land took on a pale light, utterly fascinating, and yet, strangely peculiar. It seemed as if one was looking through violet-ray glasses.

We drive on, my brother Sung and I.

We came upon the city once more, Richmond, El Cerrito, Berkeley, Emervilled and then Oakland. In oakland, at four a:m, it was dark, and I saw no more the light blue, the dark blue, and the hills of the open land.

I promised myself that at the first opportunity I shall write something about my trip to Vallejo, and how the simple coming of dawn affects me that night.

Well, the moment has come, and this is the result of it, something simple, pure, and utterly unimportant, but I had to get it off my mind, and it's off! (meaning the story, and not my mind.)





Sunday and Easter came over this troubled world once again. The five trees across the street had all blossomed forth into delicate green leaves, and the wild birds flickered in and out, chirping and singing in symphonic ecstasy, and I felt myself once again, singing this song of springtime gladness. In the winter these five trees were bare, but in the approach of fall, I saw the brown-red leaves floating downward toward the earth, where they turned to dust in the coming of the chill winter, but always in the coming of spring, especially during the Easter, the leaves took on a fragrant and magnificent feeling, and this Sunday as I gazed across the street, I saw those five trees again, and they were all in bloom. And it was Easter.

The day was warm, and the air was hot and uncomfortable, but somehow, watching these trees swaying back and forth made me forget about the hot air, for these trees always held a fascination to me. I saw them, tall, stately, and indeed magnificent too. Sometimes when the weather was bad, I could hear the playing wind fighting its way through the singing leaves, and in the coming of morning, many of the leaves had fallen, but always the trees are there, and I am glad.

This Easter Sunday I went up to the roof of our house, and there I gazed across the street to the five trees. The roof is very low, and the trees are very tall, so tall that even while I was lying down, I could see them swaying this way and that, giving forth mysterious sounds, communing with nature in this day of spring.

Sometimes I would look at them, drinking in the beauty

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Sometimes I would look at them, drinking in the beauty



of the trees for many moments, and there was nothing that I could say, for these five trees stirred me inwardly, somehow I cannot explain. Many years from now, after you and I will have gone away, these trees would still be here, and the green leaves too, greener than ever in Easter, and although I shall not be here again, I will remember my five trees across the street from my home.

It was Easter morning on this Sunday, as I have said, and I saw the trees in the spring of our year. All was quietness everywhere, and I was up on the roof alone. In this secluded silence of this morn, this Easter Morn, in the close companionship of these five trees, the hot air and wind singing its song of spring, I looked far away in the distance. There the blue hills of beloved Berkeley still stands. And a feeling of being alive, the joy of breathing, the magnificence of knowing, to breathe fully, (pardon me, Mr. Saroyan), to live, surged through this very air. And for a moment I was lost in the song of Easter.

The desolation of darkness was gone, and in its place the five trees brought forth a message of hope, and the weeping and laughter of the sad earth were no more for this moment of moment (again with apologies to Saroyan).

Sitting here in the sun, in the morn of our Easter, the five trees kissing the spring air, the blue and violet hills of Berkeley, the quietness and voidness of nothing, and this then was Easter.

The significance of the five trees, of the flowers, even of the woods, and wild growth of nature, they too were not ugly completely, but really beautiful, and this Easter song



I had seen for many moments, and there was nothing that I  
could say, for these five trees stirred me inwardly, somehow

leaves too, greener than ever in winter, and although I shall  
not be here again, I will remember my five trees across the  
street from my home.

It was Easter morning on this Sunday, as I have said, and  
I saw the trees in the spring of our year. All was distance

silence of this world, this Easter morn, in the close compan-

its song of spring, I looked far away in the distance. There

the blue hills of beloved Berkeley still stand. And a feeling

of being alive, the joy of breathing, the significance of knowing,

to breathe fully, (Gordon me, Mr. Gordon), to live, stirred through

this very air. And for a moment I was lost in the song of Easter.

The sensation of darkness was gone, and in its place

the five trees brought forth a message of hope, and the weeping

moment (again with apologies to Longfellow).

five trees kissing the spring air, the blue and violet hills

of Berkeley, the distance and voice a of nothing, and this

then was Easter.

The significance of the five trees, of the flowers, even

and wild growth of nature, they too were not

beautiful, and this Easter song

of spring came over this weeping world.

Let us forget for the moment the desolation. The weeping. And alas, the tragedy, the hopelessness of the hopeless. The sadness of the sad, and the wailing song of despair.

We will look at the five trees, and see them as something symbolic of hope, something to forget the ugliness of the earth, and forget while the trees are here, and remember while the trees are not here. It is here and everywhere, Mr. Saroyan, so breathe deeply, inhale and exhale now, this moment. In the quietness of this morn of universal gladness, let us remember that we are alive, and we are alive. Yes.

The hotness of the afternoon wore on, and the five trees sang its song of springtime gladness, and I myself, a small atom of this universe, saw for the moment the living, and not the dead, saw the five trees, saw the birds flying in and out, here and there, and the song of Easter, of the leaves, of the flowers, of the trees and even laughter too. The weeping and sadness do not belong, and I sat in the sun, feeling its warmth, then the wind, the azure blue of the sky, but especially of the greenness of my five trees across the street.

The song of spring is still singing, the laughter of glad tidings still echoes, and the five trees still grows, and I with them am growing too.

And thus it is, in the Sunday morn of this Easter, up on the roof, and here <sup>am</sup> I, but where are you?

I am the five trees, and I am singing a song of spring, but are you too?

I am the five trees, and I am growing in this day of spring, but are you too?

to the same, the same, the same.

and the same, the same, the same, the same, the same, the same.

and the same, the same, the same, the same, the same, the same.

and the same, the same, the same, the same, the same, the same.

we will look at the five trees, and see them as something  
symbolic of hope, something to forget the ugliness of the earth,  
and forget while the trees are here, and remember while the  
trees are here, and remember while the trees are here,  
so breathe deeply, inhale and exhale now, this moment, in  
the mistiness of this morn of universal blindness, let us remem-

ber that we are here, and that we are here, and that we are here.

and the same, the same, the same, the same, the same, the same.

sang its song of springtime gladness, and I myself, a small  
atom of this universe, saw for the moment the living, and not  
the dead, saw the five trees, saw the birds flying in and out,  
and the same, the same, the same, the same, the same, the same.

sadness do not belong, and I sat in the sun, feeling its

warmth, then the wind, the same wind of the sea, but

and the same, the same, the same, the same, the same, the same.

and the same, the same, the same, the same, the same, the same.

tidings still echoes, and the five trees still grow, and I

and the same, the same, the same, the same, the same, the same.

And thus it is, in the sunny morn of this Easter, up

on the roof, and here I, but where are you?

I am the five trees, and I am singing a song of spring,

but are you too?

and the same, the same, the same, the same, the same, the same.

and the same, the same, the same, the same, the same, the same.



I am the five trees, and I am this boy on the roof, watching the growth of spring, and what am I?

I am the resurrection of a life, Mr. Saroyan, and so brother breathe deeply, inhale and exhale.

And thus Easter was over, and I am mortal again, going through this weeping world. I am mortal again, so I too will inhale. And then exhale.

I am very glad to hear from you and hope you are well.  
I am writing you now as I am at home and have some time.  
I am very glad to hear from you and hope you are well.  
I am writing you now as I am at home and have some time.  
I am very glad to hear from you and hope you are well.  
I am writing you now as I am at home and have some time.

Ophelia Missing:

near the 'Train Show Meet  
Hudson and Hope





My Rendezvous with You

Say, have you heard about her? Imagine telling a son of hers that his father is dead.

Really, you don't say, and a woman as sweet as she is too.

Oh, Mama, Mama, who's that man with the funny eyes?

Why, son, there's nothing to be afraid of. Go to your daddy and kiss <sup>him</sup>. Don't be afraid of your daddy.

No, no, no, he's not my daddy, he's not my daddy. Oh, Mama, I'm afraid of the man with the funny eyes.

George, George, what can I do? Oh, darling, darling.

Ha...ha...haaaaaaaa....

Yes, and two-timing her husband too.

Well, you don't say.

Ha...ha...haaaaaaaa....

Mama, Mama, Mama, Maaaaaaa....

It's all right son, don't be afraid, don't be afraid.

He's not my daddy, he's not my daddy, my daddy is dead, dead, dead, DEAD!

No, no, no, no, your daddy isn't dead. This is your daddy son.

He isn't my daddy, he isn't, no, no, no.

Ha...ha...haaaaaaaa....

Oh, George, George, George!

Ha...ha...haaaaaaaa...ha.....haaaaaaaa....

Tuesday always frightened her immensely. It was the day when she went to see him, the day when she must remind herself





again of the time that had passed since the day it happened. Four years it had been, she knew, and each one like a long tedious century, longer still because Ronny didn't know, and she knew deep in her heart that she couldn't tell him, not yet. Maybe after George is better, she might tell, and not until then.

How much longer could she stand anymore of this mental torture, she wondered. Her days were like haunting memories from a dreary world, similiar to a person suffering from an aberrant mind.

Oh, George, George, she often prayed, when are you coming back? When are you coming back, if ever at all?

And the days had gone by, slowly, drearily, and when she thought again of him, she wept often. Sometimes she could not bring herself to realize that it was so, and that it really had happened. That day lurked in the interior of her mind, deep down in the beyond of remembrance, but it was there. When she realized that it was a reality, that it was something that really happened to her, and to George, she lost herself in the fantastic worries of her tortured mind.

No, it couldn't be, she often thought, no, no, it couldn't have happened to us, not to George and me. How am I ever going to tell Ronny? How can I?

But always when Tuesday came around, she knew the bitterness of it all, the tragic and suffering of her heart, the unhappiness of her life. Sometimes she was able to forget about him, to forget that anything unpleasant had ever happened. When she was with Kent, she was able <sup>to</sup> shut away the lingering



memories of that tragic hour.

Now Tuesday had come again, and once more she must go to him. She must go to see him even though it seemed hopeless, even though he might not care, or could not care for the moment. Always when she got there, she said to him, "How are you, George? I am so glad to see you. You look so well." But she couldn't keep on saying that, she just couldn't, not that George would know the difference at all.

Only once had he answered her and called her by her name, that was about a year ago when she went up there, and seeing her, he suddenly said, "Judith, Judith, you come back, you're back," then quickly the light in his eyes died out, and he remained silent once more. He sat there on his bed, lost in thought, a man ~~separated~~ separated, forgotten, lost in the space of time. Sometimes a look of sudden remembrance appeared on his face, a recapturing of the past as he remembered it. But more often there was the look of not knowing, of forgetfulness, and whenever she saw that in his face, her heart froze beneath her dress.

But she was a woman of courage, and for four long years she kept saying to herself, "Someday, perhaps someday you shall come back to me again."

Is that someday ever going to come? George, George? Someday I shall see you again, someday, someday.

She had inquired about him, eager to know when if ever George was going to come back. There was hope, she was told, at least she could hope, and she knew that forever the curse would haunt her, and Ronny must never know the truth.





Yes, son, your daddy passed away in the hospital long ago. You never saw your daddy, son.

But how could she conceal it from him? How? How?

No, no, no, your father didn't die in a hospital. Ask your mother, Ronny, ask her, ask her.

Ha...ha...

Mother, mother, did my father die in a hospital?

Why yes, son, yes, he's dead, dead, do you hear?

Say, have you heard? Why she's....

No, well, can you imagine?

Stop It! Stop it! Everyone of you, George! George!

Suddenly she felt a poignant pang in her heart. After all, four years of this were enough to discourage her, to break her, and if she wasn't the woman she is, she would have gone away, yes, gone away long ago. She remembered what Kent had told her, "I love you, Judith, and I could take care of you, won't you say yes?"

How well she remembered that, but she hadn't the courage to tell him the truth about George. She loved George, but she couldn't keep on like this any longer. She was afraid that if she told Kent about him, he might not ever see her again.

Oh, George, George, what shall I do? she wondered often.

She couldn't understand the train of thoughts that kept bothering her all morning. Everytime when she prepared to go to see him, she felt exactly like this, unable to comprehend what it was all about.

George had never seen Ronny. She never told him about her child, but the child often asked, "Where is my daddy?"





"Why, your daddy is sick in a hospital, Ronny," she said.

"I like to see my daddy."

"Maybe someday when he is better, dear," she said, always putting him off.

She made up her mind that Ronny must never know the truth. What if people say his daddy is a...

Oh, I can't bear it. No, no, no, he must never find out the truth about George.

Oh, George, George, if you only knew. I remember how you used to come home, your face flushed with excitement. You held me in your arms and pressed me close to your body. You were so young then, and we were so happy, so gloriously happy that I didn't think it possible for two persons to be so happy. Don't you remember it all?

Are those days to be gone forever, darling? Are they?

Come back to me, darling, come back!

Why must she feel like this on Tuesdays, her whole body sad and depressed.

She noticed that the sky grew dark, nothing but just a dark ominous blanket of gloom. Blackness, blackness, everywhere. She couldn't help thinking of that day four years ago, a day exactly like this, this same dark sky, this same ominous threat of impending danger.

After the happening the doctor said to her, "You are very fortunate to escape with your life. It isn't always that a pregnant woman could stand such a shock."

But was she really fortunate, was she? She often wondered to herself. Yes, she escaped with her life, but there *was*



George so helpless, so long in his suffering. And then there was Ronny to think of.

Then there was young Kent who asked her to marry him.

I wondered if he would ask me to marry him if he knew about George, she wondered to herself. She wept whenever she spoke about George, she couldn't help it.

She had hoped so long for his recovery, but now after all this time, what was there to hope for? How could she hope to have anymore faith? But George mustn't go on like this. Perhaps someday he would be all right again.

She looked out the window again. Rain would be falling soon. How she detested the rain, the gloom, the cold wind of December. She went to the closet and put on her heavy overcoat. She took out an umbrella and a pair of galoshes.

Oh, George, George, if things were only different. If you were only here. You never saw your son Ronny. He asked for you often. Daddy, daddy, he asked, but what could I tell him? I couldn't tell him the truth; could I? I just couldn't let him know.

She picked up her compact and dashed a layer of powder over her cheeks. She did it not because she cared how she would look to George, but because it was a habit with her.

She would be home to look at Ronny in time. Anyway the nurse would be taking good care of him.

She pulled her coat close to her, and went outside. A slight trickle began to fall from the sky.

Ronny must never know, she kept thinking to herself.





People rushed all around her, and suddenly she imagined that George was there, one of the crowd, one of those moving people, going home with her.

Judith darling. She turned and looked at him.

George, oh George, you've come back to me.

Yes, darling, I have come back. I come back to see my little boy, my Ronny.

He's a darling, dear, you'll love him. He has your eyes, your ears, your nose. He's you, dear. Her voice sounded happy.

He looked down at her and kissed her. How warm George's arms were, how comfortable too.

"Oh, George!" she called out, frightened at the voice that spoke out. Quickly the scene faded away, and in its place she felt only the coldness of the wind and rain, but George had gone away.

Her whole body shuddered at the long ride ahead of her, fifty long minutes in which to do nothing but stare out the window, taking in all the familiar scenes again.

The streetcar came rushing up, and a dread came over her as she watched it come to a slow stop in front of her. All sort of cars frightened her now, and she could hardly stay in one of them without a constant dread of impending danger.

She sat down at a seat in the middle, and looked out the window. There was nothing else she could do. She couldn't read, not on Tuesday anyway. The gray clouds up above turned carbon black, and the city darkened. The streetcar gathered speed and moved away, then it turned and headed toward the





outskirt of the city.

She thought of the times that she had passed these same scenes. Nothing seemed change, always the same buildings, the same people, the same futility, the hopelessness of it all.

To the right of her was the park where he used to take her. It was there that he said, "Judith darling, I love you."

Oh, George, George, are those days to be gone forever?

The rain fell steadily against the car's windows. She drew her coat close to her. What shall I say to him when I see him? What shall I say this time? I can't keep on saying that I <sup>am</sup> glad to see him, and that he is looking well.

She thought of him, especially his eyes. They somehow frightened her, those eyes that could see, and yet could not. Whenever she saw them, she looked away, unable to stand that far away look she saw. <sup>there</sup> Before, his eyes were blue, and she saw those long curly lashes, the regular features of his lips and nose. But now, when she gazed into them, there was that phantom look of despair and utter agony. Sometimes he would just look at her, his eyes unmoving, and there was a fire which suddenly flared from its smothered ashes, and for one brief moment he was able to recapture something he knew, something he felt.

Most of the time he said nothing to her. When she said, "Hello, George," he just stared at her, saying nothing.

One year, two years, three years, now it was the fourth.

George, George, George, are you ever going to come back?

It was always a crucial moment when she had to see him.

George, her George was no more. Four long years she had come



back and forth, hoping for a sign that he was well again, but always she was disappointed.

She felt a cold shudder creeping over her body, wringing her heart out. What was she going to say to him?

Maybe I go up to him and say, Listen, George, little Ronny asked how you were. Yes, he's a darling, with the same golden hair like yours. You'll love him when you see him.

She closed her eyes. No, I couldn't do that. I'll never tell you about Ronny. He must never know about you.

She wondered how he felt there. Was he ever lonely?

Oh, George, George, this must be a dream. I waited so long, yet it seemed to be forever now. I love you, George, but you won't understand. You are gone from me, always.

She cried bitterly. She covered her face with a handkerchief. She couldn't let George see her like that.

The car was going up a steep hill, and soon she would be there. The rain had already stopped, but the whole atmosphere was one of wetness and coldness. When she got out of the car she breathed in the pure deep air, damp with recent rain, and she felt better. She could face him now, she was sure.

She entered the large white building, hardly conscious of herself so intense was she in her thoughts. When at last she came before him, she could hardly speak.

"Ha...ha...ha..." a voice wailed from the upper floor.

She felt a cold shiver run up her back, then slowly the laughter lost itself into the emptiness of space, and she relaxed a little.





She said softly, "George."

He stared at her intensely, his eyes falling over her, then he looked away. He raised his head slowly and looked up again.

She did not dare to look him straight in the eyes.

Oh, George, George, don't stand there saying nothing to me. Why don't you say something, say anything. Don't stare at me like that. I'm Judith, I'm your wife, your wife, don't you remember? I've been coming here for the last four years to see you. Oh, George, say something to me, say something to me. Let me hear you say something.

Don't you remember a little green house, with a small yard in the back. Don't you remember a girl you used to take to the park on Sundays? You remember that day at the country, don't you?

"Oh, George," she said aloud.

"Ha...ha...haaaaaaaaaa...haaaaaaa..." an eerie voice wailed from somewhere.

She felt a cold wind winging around her. She felt his steady eyes piercing through her body.

So you want me to say something, all right. What the hell do you care about me in here? I rot here and die, and what do you care. You stand there looking at me saying, George, George, GEORGE, GEORGE, but it won't do you any good. I'm never coming back, do you hear. Never, never, never, NEVER. And you don't think I know about young Kent, do you? I do. You want to marry him, don't you? You thought I don't know anything about it, don't you? Why don't you marry that





sonavabitch and get it over with. Why don't you tell him about me? Why, why, WHY???? Ha...ha...haaaa....you didn't think I know, did you? Tell Kent about me, go ahead, tell him. You getting scare, aren't you, you're afraid you'll lose him, don't you? Why don't you bring him up here to see me? You're ashamed of me, are you? Aren't you???????????? Ha...ha...haaaa.....

Oh, no, no, no, George, no, no, no. I'm not afraid of you. I'm not ashamed of you. I love you, I love you, yes, yes.

Ha...ha...haaa....ha...

Where is my son? Where is Ronny. Bring him up sometime. Are you afraid he might know who is daddy is?

No, no, no, George, no, no, NO!

Yes you are. I can see it in your face.

Say have you heard.....

You don't say.

Oh, Mama, who's that man with the funny eyes?

That's your daddy son, go and kiss your daddy.

No, no, no, no, he's not my daddy, he's not my DADDY, NO.

Ha...haaaaa.... come here son, come to daddy.

Mama, Mama, Maaaaaamaaaaa....Ma.....

You're scared of your father, aren't you? You're scare of him.

Oh, George, George!

She looked up and saw his eyes.

"George, George, George!" she yelled out. Suddenly the whole world darkened, and she felt herself sinking into



an empty space.

Around and around, around...around...

"Ha...ha...haaaaa..." a voice echoed from somewhere.

"Are you ready?" George said.

"Just a minute, darling," Judith answered, packing away the sandwiches in the basket.

"The trip would do both of us good," ~~he~~ remarked, "The two of us have been working too hard."

"You right, darling," Judith said, "I noticed that you look drawn and tired."

"We'll lose all that this afternoon, won't we?"

She came close to him, and he kissed her.

"Come," he said, "let's go."

He drove the car quickly, and she sat there breathing in the fresh air of the wide countryside. How fresh everything was, so clean and vigorating.

They came at last to a nice spot under a large oak tree. There they spread the food out and discovered that they were terribly hungry. How joyous it all was, so calm, so cool.

They lay under the tree in each other arms, feeling happy, more happy than they had ever been. When she told him that she was expecting a little child, he said happily, "Really?, Judith, darling, gee honey, that's swell."

Then he kissed her tenderly, affectionately.

They wandered across meadows. They picked wildflowers. The time passed. Then when they looked at the sky, it had turned from a dazzling blue to a dull gray color.





"Let's hurry back," she said to him.

"We're just started to enjoy <sup>ourselves</sup> and have fun. Just a little longer." And so they stayed. They didn't leave until the rain started to fall.

By now it was dark. It was cold, and he drove the car quickly, rapidly.

"Be careful, darling," she told him.

"There's nothing to be afraid of. Everything is going to be all right."

She smiled and leaned close to him, feeling warm and contented, thinking of her little one that was to come soon.

She hoped it was boy, because she loved boys. She adored them.

In the midst of thinking she heard a sound like crashing thunder. Then-darkness.

When she woke up in the whiteness of the hospital she felt a throbbing in her head.

"My husband, how is he? Is he all right?" she demanded of the nurse.

"Yes, he's all right. Don't you worry."

"Could I see him," she asked.

"He's hurt, but I won't worry if I were you."

Two <sup>weeks</sup> ~~days~~ later she recovered. She was happy when she was told that the little child in her was not injured in any way.

She went in to see him then. She noticed the quietness of everyone.

"We didn't wish to let you at first, <sup>know</sup> ~~first~~ Mrs. Hanson. You



were so ill that we kept the truth from you. Your husband is seriously hurt. His head is badly smashed, I'm afraid."

Her eyes fell. "But, he's not.."

"No, ~~###~~ Mrs. Hanson, there's no fear of that." She relaxed for the moment. She went toward him.

"George, are you all right?"

He looked up at her, and his eyes frightened her, so strange were they.

She murmured, "George, George."

The doctor said, "I'm sorry to tell you, but you husband is.." she fainted before he could finish.

George was <sup>*separated*</sup> ~~taken~~ away, and now four years had passed by. In the meantime little Ronny came, but she never told him about the child. When the child came she was happy. It was his son too. Out of her had come life, George's life.

Around, around, around....

"Ha...ha...ha....haaaaa." a voice wailed across the hall. She opened her eyes and saw a nurse leaning down toward her.

"There, you're all right," the nurse said.

She got up slowly from the couch, and her head throbbed with confusion. She went out of the building quickly, eager to get away from the hallucinations and memories.

The rain was falling once more. She must get back home to see Ronny. She remembered George's eyes. How terrifying they were.





She felt herself trembling wildly, waiting for the streetcar to take her back home. When at last she got into the car, she felt a security that eased her. She felt the tears coming into her eyes.

Yes, he must tell Ronny that his daddy is really dead. Yes, your father died long ago. You were too small to understand it, darling. You weren't even born yet.

Say, did you hear about her? She told her son that her husband died..can you imagine a woman like that.

Ha..ha..haaaaaaa....

Your daddy is a something. Your daddy is a something. Shame, shame, shame..

George....George....George....

Ronny is the son of a...

No, no, no, nobody could be that cruel.

The car rushed through the rain, and she sat there cold and frightened.

I want to see my son. I am as much a part of him as you. Ronny, come to daddy. This is your daddy. There, there, don't be afraid. There's nothing to be afraid of. Come here son, let your daddy kiss you. Your daddy loves you as much as your mother.

No, no, you're not my daddy. Mother, who's that man with the funny eyes?

There, there, there's nothing to be afraid of. It's your old an, don't you know your old man? I told you that he died in a hospital, but he's not dead, he's alive.

No, no .



Ha...ha...haaaa...come to your daddy, come to daddy.

No, no, no, you're not my daddy.

She wept again. She thought of Kent again.

I can't marry you, I just can't. You don't know about George, did you? I never told you about him. I wanted you so much, but I can't tell you, because I was afraid I might lose you. It's all my fault. I should have told you the truth in the beginning, then you won't inquire too much, but now when I wish to tell all, I just can't. I'm afraid to tell. You hate me now if I tell you, after all these months. I told you I separated from my husband, but that isn't the truth. He's still my husband even though I don't live with him anymore. I don't think I would ever be able to marry you.

Darling, I love you, I love you.

Yes, yes, you love me now, but in the end you'll hate me. You'll despise me. Oh, Kent, Kent, darling, I can't marry you. I desire you, I love you so much.

She thought of George again. In that place, day in day out, wondering what it was all about. No, no, it can't be. It can't be.

Say, have you heard...have you heard..that woman...why such a woman...ha..ha...such a woman. And to think she would do such a thing to a husband who is unable to fight back.

Why, hello, Mrs. Hanson, how is your husband? Isn't it too bad? Isn't it too bad, and such a nice man too.

The hell with all of you, what do you care about my hus-





band. Stop torturing me, all of you, everyone of you. I'm all right, I'm all right, and my husband is fine, just fine... my husband is fine, just leave me alone! Leave me alone! Oh Ronny, Ronny, how could I keep it from you?

Mama, mama, is it true what they say about my daddy?  
Is it true, Mama?

Oh, son, son, son, what can I tell you, what can I say?  
Oh, Ronny, Ronny, Ronny.

Ha..ha...ha...haaaaaaaa...aaaa...

Is it true what they say?

No, no, no, no...

Who is my daddy?...who is he?...

Your daddy is dead, daddy is dead, he 's dead, dead, dead, dead, dead, DEAD!

Oh, mama, mama, my daddy isn't dead. My daddy isn't dead. Everybody tells me that my daddy isn't dead. Is it true, Mama?

No, son, no no no no no....your daddy is DEAD!

Bastard, bastard, bastard....haa..ha..ha...ha..ha...

Stop it, stop it, stop using that word.

Where is my daddy, where is my daddy?...he's in there, ha..ha..bastard...bastard...BASTARD...

Oh, George, George, help me, help me!

The tears streamed out of her eyes unendingly. She looked out of the car's window. The rain fell heavily.

How much longer was it going to last? Often she went up to see him, but she never mentioned Ronny to him. She made up her mind that he was never going to know, not until he was well



again at least.

There was hope for his recovery, the doctor had told her, ### there was hope. Hope, hope, hope. She didn't know what the word meant anymore.

All these years, these years.

But those eyes of his, won't they ever remember? Won't they ever remember the day in the country?

Oh, George, I have a rendezvous with you, someday, someday perhaps, I'll have a rendezvous with you. That day must come again.

Yes, George, you'll love your son when you see him. He is exactly like you, George. The day when you come home, I shall have everything ready. I will dress little Ronny up in his nice clothes. I shall say to him when he sees you, "This is your daddy, son, your daddy." And he would come up to you, and hug you tightly. You would love him very much.

He would <sup>say</sup> say, "Is this my daddy, mom? Is this really my daddy?" And I would say, "Yes, son, your father is back."

"Oh, Mom, I have a daddy, I have a daddy just like other boys, haven't I?"

Then you George, you would take your little son up in your arms and you would hold him tightly. You would smell the fragrance of his clean flesh, your own flesh and blood. All this would take place when you come back.

I have a rendezvous with you, darling, come back, come back soon.

I yearned for you so often, and my heart ached to see you so lonely and sad. I am so lonely, so far away. Someday





when you are well, we will begin all over again, just like we were, before anything happened.

That rendezvous will come again. Oh, George, George, come back to me.

She dried her eyes, and got off the car. She walked slowly home.

That evening Ronny slept soundly on her lap. He fell asleep while she was reading to him. She held <sup>him</sup> ~~her~~ tightly, her eyes suddenly filling with tears.

"No, Ronny, you will never know that your father is in the insane asylum for these four years. You will never know about the automobile accident that caused it. When your father comes back well again, if ever, you shall know about him. Meanwhile, he's dead, Ronny, dead to you."

She held the boy tightly and wept again.

Ha...ha...haaaaaaa...aaaaa.....a voice wailed from beyond.



Jonh Leyim (Jon Lee)  
334 Fifth Street  
Oakland, Calif.

short story

## The Story of a Triangle

### 1

My father and mother were living in an old house near the waterfront, and that night in March I was born.

### 2

My father was a very poor man then, and he had to work very hard to provide for me and my mother. My sister was two years old, and her name was Mary. My father named me Jerry.

### 3

We were very poor then, I remembered. Mother did not have much time to care for my sister and me. Father had a job working in the boats near the waterfront. He and my mother quarreled very much. My father spent much of his money in drinking. Mother did not like it. They quarreled very often.

### 4

I spent my early life in the surroundings of the waterfront. There the people ~~were~~<sup>was</sup> poor, and the people was no better off than we were. We lived in an old broken shack with broken furniture. Sometimes we went hungry, for there was nothing good to eat. During this time my mother would cry, and her face would grow old, and her eyes red with crying. My mother was not happy. She did not really love my father.

### 5

One year we moved away to a slightly better house near Chinatown. The house had two bedrooms, one kitchen, and one big living room. But we had no new furniture there. We lived there for two years, and then fire~~d~~ burned the house down. But





my father collected enough insurance to last us for awhile.  
We moved again to another house.

## 6

When I was five years old my sister Mary took me by the hand and led me down to the school near our house. I was very timid then, and the first day at school I cried. Miss Lang, the kintergarden teacher consoled me. She used her soft hand, and stroke my face. I still remembered Miss Lang. She still teaches school now. I was very timid, and I had very few friends. All day I sat in the schoolroom, very quiet and calm. Once the teacher marked me absent, because I was so quiet.

## 7

I went from one grade to another.

## 8

My father and mother quarreled very often. Once father did not come home to sleep. Mother cried in her room. My sister Mary and I were afraid.

## 9

I graduated from the grammar school when I was thirteen, and I went to Junior High. I stayed there one year, then I went to High School. When I graduated from High School, I received very high honors, because I had good marks, and my studies were very high in rating. My mother was glad. I was too poor to go to college. My father cannot afford to pay for my studies.

## 10

I had no work to do, and I was lonely too.



11

I had many brothers and sisters, ~~and~~ <sup>but</sup> none was working. Mother still worked at her electric machine. Father was laid off by the boat company. I had nothing to do. Mother worked day in and day out. She got older and older in looks. We were very poor.

12

Mother and father spoke each other very rarely.

13

I knew something was wrong.

14

Father got sick one day. The doctor said to send him away to a sanatorium. He went to a public sanatorium in the country, because we had no money. Mother had no money. I got a job selling newspaper in the street corner. My sister Mary got a job selling oranges in the market. We ~~managed~~ managed to get along.

15

One day one of father's friend dropped in to see us. He wanted to know how father was. His name was Jack Lenning. He came very often after that.

16

I think mother fell in love with Jack. She felt happy when he was at the house, and for the first time in a long time she sang when she was working, like in the olden days when she was married to father.

17

One night Jack stayed very late. When I awoke in the





middle of the night, I heard the footsteps of someone going out of the house. I knew it was Jack.

18

Father was getting better, the doctor at the sanatorium told us, but he was not to come out until he was completely well. The doctor said it would take a lot of time.

19

Mother did not seem to mind. She did not tell father about Jack. I did not tell father either. Mary did not tell.

20

I hated my mother very much.

21

Mother went out in the evenings very often in the company of Jack. Sometimes she did not come home till late at night. Mother forget completely about ~~about~~ father. She loved Jack very much.

22

One night I heard strange noises in mother's bedroom. Then I heard the coughing of a man. I thought I was dreaming. I felt myself tremble. I cannot sleep. Later I heard someone coming out of the room, come softly down the stairs, then go ~~went~~ outside, and drive away in an automobile. I rushed to the window. I recognized it was Jack's car.

23

I did not tell anyone of what I heard or saw. Mary did not know.

24

I went back to sleep, completely disgusted.



25

I made up my mind that night not to ever get married. I don't want a wife who slept with other men.

26

Father was slowly getting well, but not well enough to be able to come home yet. I wanted to tell father many times about Jack. Yet I cannot say what I wanted to say.

27

Mother slept with Jack very often.

28

My sister Mary did not know. I did not tell anyone.

29

My mother did not go to visit father anymore. Only my sister and I went.

30

One day mother left a note to Mary. She was going away, she said, never to come back anymore. Mary showed me the note. We went and told father what happened.

31

~~to~~ I told father that mother slept with Jack when he went ~~to~~ the sanatorium. Father did not say anything. His eyes filled with tears, he said nothing.

32

One week later he died.

33

We heard nothing of what happened to mother, or where she was.

34

Mary and I were like two orphans. We were alone.





35

I made up my mind that I shall forever remain single. I did not want a wife.

36

My sister Mary married a young man she knew. She was happy.

37

My mother had fallen down into the gutter, I heard.

38

This is the story of any man, of any woman. This is the story of life itself. This is the story of the eternal triangle.

39

This is the story of life as it was, life as it is, life as it shall be.

40

This is the story of a triangle.

I . . . . . I . . . . . I . . . . .

and . . . . .

. . . . .

. . . . .

I must have one of my off days  
when I wrote this story. But since  
I finish it, I thought I must hand it  
in anyway. Perhaps there is no sense  
to it, but it is supposed to be a story.

Jon

There are three children in our family. All are boys. I am the oldest. Frank is the second. Dennis is the third.

I am tall. I am thin. I wear glasses.

Frank is tall. He is fat. He wears glasses.

Dennis is short. He is strong. He does not wear glasses.

None of us look alike. So different are we that many do not believe we are brothers at all. We seem to belong to different families. But we are brothers.

I was born about twenty-eight years ago. As far as I can remembered my mother told me that I was born in an old broken house. It was on Seventh Street where I first saw the light of day. "You weight six pounds and two ounces. You were a healthy baby. Your eyes were bright and shiny. Your father and I <sup>were</sup> ~~were~~ very fond of you. Your uncle suggested that we named you Eric. We did not like it so we name you Michael."

My mother told that to me when I was about ten. I still remember it. Michael Buster Denny is my real name. Sometimes when people laughed at me I left the Buster out. At those times my name was Michael Denny. My close friends called me Mike. But Jackie, one of my closest friends called me Den. I want people to call me Den. It sounded so short and simple. And I am a simple person.

So simple that I never dressed up for parties or occasions. I had never owned a suit in my life. One time when Mrs. Linden's daughter got married, my mother told me to buy a suit. I did not, so I did not go to the party. I did not like to go to parties. So I did not buy a suit. Since that day I had never bought a suit. And never attended any other parties.





(2)

I never used hair wax on my hair. In the morning when I woke up my hair were like bristles. Stiff and cranky. One day I tried to use some hair wax. I looked in the mirror. My hair appeared as though they were glued down on my head. It was sticky. And messy. I did not feel right. I shampoo my hair and I went outside to have it dried. After my hair was dried, I could not comb it down straight. So I put on my cap for two or three hours.

Two or three hours later I took my cap off. My hair looked as though <sup>a</sup>it was <sup>^</sup>hat. It was very funny. But still I did not use any hair wax.

When I grew older I began to grow taller. And still taller. My mother said to me one day, "You are just like your uncle. He was six feet four when he was twenty-eight." That day I went to measure myself. I found out that I am only six feet tall. I was glad for I did not like to be tall like my uncle.

I weight myself. And I found out that I was very light. That day I started taking cod liver oil. But I did not gain an ounce. And I wondered why.

When I was about twenty I noticed that my face was bony and skinny. I often stared in the mirror. I could not look in. Because I was so thin. I started taking exercise. I tried face movements. It did no good. I was as thin as ever. At night I slept at eight thirty. I woke up late in the morning. But still I was bony.

Then my family began to make fun of me. My nickname was Skinny. I began to feel self concious. When I walked in the streets I felt as though everybody was staring at me behind my back. I tried to shrink myself so that I would appeared shorter.



(3)

I looked in the windows and I saw that I appeared like a walking telephone pole. Then I straightened up. I was so tall and thin. I did not walk on the streets where there were many people. I walked on the deserted streets. And I did not feel self conscious.

As the days went by my face looked green and pale. It was so strange and ugly. I looked at the photograph of a movie star. And I envied him.

I took a photograph the other day. When I looked at it, I destroyed both the negative and the print. I never took a picture since that fateful day.

When I was twenty-two, I was still taller. I was six feet three. I often heard my mother said, "Michael is getting to be a big boy. He is just like his uncle. Perhaps he would be taller than him." I never felt right when someone tells me how tall I looked. I wished to be about five feet ten. But it is an impossibility now. I guessed I would still continue to grow taller and taller.

I saw photographs of myself in an album. One was taken when I was two years of age. I was fat and chubby. Rosy cheek and healthy. I admired the picture very much. I wished I was fat and chubby now. I looked at my baby face. In the picture it was cute. It was handsome. But now. It was different. How time could change a person's face.

On another page there was another picture taken when I was ten years of age.

The face in the picture was thinner than the face of the baby. But still it was round and full like a moon on a clear night. Just like a moon.





My name should be Michael Skinny Denny instead of Buster Denny.

Brother Frank was very fat. When he was a baby people called him Fatty. Even today he is called Fatty. Frank is younger than me by two years. He is twenty-six. He is not as tall as I am. But still he is very tall. About six feet. He is husky and strong. Because he is near-sighted he <sup>has</sup> had to wear glasses lately. He is a great sport enthusiast and he loves to play ball very much. Wearing glasses is a great nuisance. He has broken his glasses so many times that he could not keep track of it.

His face is round as a moon. Browned as the sand of the earth. His health is magnificent. Glorious. And he is popular with the weaker sex. Meaning girls, if there is any doubt.

When he was a small baby everybody called him Big Stomach Frank because his stomach was so very big. When he grew up his stomach receded a little but still he was very big. And fat. He is strong as an ox. Once I had a fight with him and I was almost crushed to death because his strength was so strong. He could hold his own with any other fighter of his age. He fights and he fights but he always wins. He very rarely lost a fight with any other person.

He just loves to have his picture taken and he always <sup>has</sup> have his picture taken regularly every month.

On the walls of his room there are many pictures of himself. Some is taken when he was small. Some is of recent take. He admires those pictures very much. One day he said to me, "Don't you think that I have a good profile?" I looked at him and for the first time I noticed that he had a good profile. Since that day he always had his picture taken in profile.



When Frank was about sixteen years of age, his face became full of pimples. Big red ugly pimples. Out in the sunshine he looked ugly. His face became red and dirty. He tried oinment. It did him no good. He tried some ladies' cleasing cream. It did no good. Soon his neck and shoulder were full of pimples.

His face became full of scars. His pores looked like grains in a piece of redwood. He watched his diet. He did not eat any rich and greasy food. But the pimples remained on his face. He drank orange juice. He took lemonade. They did not help him very much. One day he said, "If I can only get rid of these pimples. They make my face so ugly. Just like a mask." I told him to wash his face with soap every night. He tried it. Soon his pimples were gone. But there were many scars on his face. Today I could see them if he goes out into the sunlight.

Frank is very fresh. He always think he is good looking. But he isn't. He thinks that I am ugly because I am thin. He always wear a necktie. He has two dozen of them. I haven't even got one. There is a certain necktie that he like very much. It is a red tie with white dots. He said that that necktie made him looked so much handsomer. "It seems to match my rosy pink cheeks," he said. I was going to laugh when I heard that. I didn't dare because I was afraid that he was going to hit me. And I am not strong enough to fight him.

I was always afraid of him. His face seemed cruel. And hard. He did all of the hard work in the house. He is a good worker. My mother liked him very much because she said that he did all of the work. She said that I am a good-for-nothing.

Frank was so different from me.





Now we come to Dennis. He is the only one in our family who could be call handsome. He really is good looking. I admire him very much. He is only twelve years of age. His face is just of the right shaped. *It* is not round like a pancake. And it is not long like a rectangle. It is perfect. Whether one looks at him full face or sideways or from the back his face is flawless. Absolutely flawless.

His skin is smooth. Soft and white. His lashes are long like a movie actress. He is not fat. And he is not hthin. He is perfect in figure and in looks. He is very popular with the girls. All are attracted to him. He is at ease in the presence of girls or boys. He knows that he is handsome but he does not show it. He does not boast about it. He keeps absolutely silent.

I like because of that. He does not like Frank. Says that Frank is too fresh. He always goes to shows with me. I always treat him.

Lately he has been taking sun baths up on the roof. He is like a bronze god now. In his bathing suit he is a perfect sight. I wished many times that I could be like him. Now I guess I can't.

Dennis is really the most untidy of all of us. He does not pay any attention to his clothes. He does not care how he looks like. But no matter how he dresses or how dirty he is, he is still handsome. I know that he does not spoil his charms because of bad habits. But he never brushes his teeth unless I force him to do it. Once I showed him a picture of a boy with false teeth. The teeth were ugly and ~~terrible~~ <sup>terrible</sup> looking. Since that day he brushes his teeth regularly.



We are three brothers, Frank, Dennis and I. Yet none of us look alike. We came from the same father and mother. Today I am tall and thin. Skinny Michael I am called. Frank is tall and fat. Big Stomach Frank, he is called. Dennis is handsome and charming. Good Looking Dennis, he is called.

Could it be possible that just a face could give us away to the strangers that we are not brothers? I know of many families where none of the children look alike. In some families all of the children look alike.

Then I thought about faces. A face is only composed of two eyes, two ears, one nose, one mouth and eyebrows and eyelashes. Yet there are no two persons in this world who look alike. What makes a Chinese look like a Chinese? What makes a Japanese look like a Japanese? Perhaps the slant of the eyes, the color of the skin, the shape of the head.

Nature is miraculous in what it could do to human faces. There are billions of people in this earth. But there is none who looks exactly and perfectly like another. Out of two eyes and a nose and ears nature has shaped such a variety of looks and appearances that would amaze anyone. It is magic.

We are three brothers. None of us look alike. But we are brothers.

One is tall and thin. One is <sup>tall</sup> ~~short~~ and fat. One is perfect and handsome. I said to myself. What a difference the face makes.

Now do you know why this story is entitled "Three Faces?"





LXVII

This story is one of mother nature's freak, and it is true if one is to believe the newspaper.

We have heard stories about babies being born with a full set of teeth. Another time we have heard stories of babies born with all their clothes on, about babies born with different colors, as the case in which a mother gave birth to five babies, one red, one yellow, one blue, one white, and one black, the colors of the old Chinese flag.

But I guess this one is the one that beats them all. The baby story to end all baby story.

It seems that a mother was sick for many years, almost ten, and she felt pains and uncomfortable feelings in her stomach. She thought she was suffering from a strange disease, and since she was a poor woman, she did not have money to care for her health.

For many years her stomach bothered her very much, and she made up her mind that someday she was going to die because of her troubles.

Year after year her stomach bothered her.

Then one day her stomach blew open with an exploding sound, and a baby dropped out <sup>from</sup> ~~from~~ her stomach. And this baby had been in her stomach for ten years or more.

So a baby could be born at the age of ten, proving that miracles could still happen in this cockeyed world.



The young couples walked around and around, their ninth continuous day, the announcer said over the mike, and still here they were, walking around the highly polished floor of the ice skating arena at Fourteenth and Grove, recently changed over to accomodate the Thrill-a-thon contest. The majority of the walkers were young, nineteen or twenty years of age. One couple was old, the only old pair on the floor.

The spectators sat up on the long wooden benches, built in bleacher style, watching the movemants of the evermoving walkers. Each one of the couples had a large white numeral on his back, hung around the shoulders, and tied with a thick string around <sup>his</sup> ~~their~~ neck.

A four piece swing band was swinging the latest popular tune, the loud music spreading over the entire arena, rhythmic and jazzy. The master of ceremonies shook his hips this way and that, turning around now and then, and throwing his hands up and down, up and down.

The young couples walked around and around, arms enfolded unto each other, their eyes staring straight up at the watchful audience. They waved their hands when they recognized someone they knew, and then they continued around and around. Back and forth, forever going, walking, walking, they kept at it. Around and around they went, forever, their aching feet refusing to give up.

Two doctors and one nurse, all in white, lined themselves against the far wall, watching, looking, on the watch for anyone who might drop out from exhaustion.

The master of ceremonies was in the little booth, located in the far end of the arena, his wide and beaming face gleaming





in the strong light.

"All right, folks, we are here to entertain you, and we want all of you to have a good time. As you know, this is the ninth day of the Thrill-a-thon contest. These young boys and girls are trying their best, and all you friends and folks out there who come here to cheer and push them on, we are grateful to you. Some of these people come from as far as New York, Pennsylvania, just to be in this contest. Now the band will play one of the latest hit tunes, The Lady in Red. All right, go to it."

The band leader gave one move of his arms, and the music started. The walking couples entwined their arms around each other, shuffling their feet, turning and tossing each other in rhythm with the fast jazz tune. The dancers danced around and around, shaking, dipping, turning, trotting. The music filled the whole arena. The spectators sat in the long benches, munching peanuts, watching, shaking their heads in time with the music.

The music ended. The shuffling and trotting ended abruptly.

"That was fine, fine," the master of ceremonies said. Then to the audience, "Remember folks, don't go away, we will have a floor show here, to start exactly at nine-thirty tonight. And we can assure you, that you will like it, with dancing, stunts, and then the grand finale, the marathon race. So just remain while the dance band will now play a song, and one of the contestants will sing for you."

The dance music leader announced over the mike, "We will now call one of the participants in this contest to come for-

"All right, fine, we have to entertain you, and we  
want all of you to have a good time. As you know, this is the  
first day of the first-then concert. These young boys and

there who come here to cheer and cheer and cheer and cheer  
for you. Some of these people come from as far as New York,

and they are just to be in this concert. Now the boys will  
play one of the best of his songs. The boys in red. All right,  
go to it."

The band leader gave one wave of his hand, and the music  
began. The music was an old-fashioned tune, and it was very

in rhythm with the first few times. The music was very strong  
and strong, strong, strong, strong, strong. The music  
filled the whole arena. The contestants sat in the front  
row, and they were all singing, singing, singing, singing in  
time with the music.

The music ended. The singing and the dancing stopped.  
"That was fine, fine," the master of ceremonies said.  
Then to the audience, "Remember boys, don't go away, we will  
have a floor show here, to start exactly at nine-thirty tonight."

and then the band played the march again. The contestants  
remain while the dance and will not play a song, and the  
the contestants will sing for you."

ward and sing for you. This young man has undoubtedly the finest baritone voice that we have had the pleasure to hear in one of these contests. Will <sup>number</sup> ~~no~~ twenty-four please come up?"

A young handsome boy about twenty-two came forward. He climbed the few steps up to the little booth, smiled at the audience, his clean cut features standing out sharp<sup>ly</sup> like a movie hero's profile.

His voice was rich and full, clear and precise, with a rich and fluent tone, reaching the high and low notes with equal facility. When he finished, the audience broke into enthusiastic applause, some<sup>even</sup> cheering and whistling loudly.

Number twenty-four smiled a wide smile, bowed two times and very modestly got off the little booth, and rejoined his girl companion.

The walkers again walked around and around, turning forever, walking forever.

The spectators sat in their long benches, their reserved seats, and watched everything that took place.

Thirty minutes went by very quickly, the walkers revolving around the floor, again and again.

Some of the spectators yawned, others stared out with sleepy eyes, some read books, and still others bought one food after another, munching hot dogs, washing it down with soda pop.

The master of ceremonies annou<sup>N</sup>nced through the mike.

"From now on, your new master of ceremonies will conduct the proceedings." He introduced the new man, a young man.



the young man had undoubtedly the

voice that we have had and for us to hear

was a very pleasant surprise.

He slipped the key into the lock and

the door opened, the clean and featureless

the entrance, the clean and featureless

the voice of the man and the

rich and thick tone, revealing the high and low notes with

an extraordinary quality, some soaring and others

the man's voice, some soaring and others

and very clearly, the little sound, and

girl companion.

The women again turned around and

however, looking forward.

The spectators sat in their

place, and looked everything that

thing, minutes went by very

revolving and the floor, again and

some of the spectators were, others

sleepy eyes, some very

food after another, reaching for

...

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...



The audience clapped their hands.

"All right, ladies and gentlemen, the show must go on. We will continue with the show. We have now what we call the bee game, and perhaps no doubt the game is very familiar to most of you, but many of you have never seen it before.

"We will ask one of the boys to come down to the center of the floor."

From a far away door, a young man appeared, all dressed up in peculiar and odd looking clothes, gesturing his hands around him. The audience laughed.

Someone said, "Huh, I don't see anything funny about that."

A silly girl giggled loudly.

The master of ceremonies said to the young <sup>boy</sup> ~~###~~ in the odd clothes.

"Now you stand here in the middle of the floor, and I will be the bee. I shall come around you three times, and the first two times when I come around you, you say nothing. But the third time, you say, 'Give it to me,' and I shall give you the honey. Now, do you understand?"

"The first two times, I say nothing, and third time I say, 'Give it to me.'"

"Yes, that's right."

"I understand."

"All right, let's start."

The audience sat up straight, eager to see what happen.

The silly girl giggled again.

The master of ceremonies ran all over the floor, making a buzzing sound like a bee. He went around the boy in the odd looking clothes.



The boy said nothing. The boy said nothing the second time either. The third ~~time~~ <sup>time</sup> the the man buzzed all around the boy, and the boy said, "Give it to me." And the man gave it to him. He opened his mouth and spurted water all over the boy's face.

The audience roared with delight, giggling, laughing out loudly. The silly girl giggled herself into a fit.

The contestants got back into the polished floor again, walking around and around forever and ever. The jazz band played softly, and the walkers revolved around the polished floor. This went on for about twenty minutes.

Then another new master of ceremonies came to replace the old one.

He too was a young man.

He blew a whistle and shouted, "All right, all the contestants will please line up against the wall, the boys over here, the girls over there. We will now present the floor show." The audience broke into applause.

"Introducing a blue singer who will sing Moaning Low."

A short young girl in blue sang a song with a very sweet voice, and her voice was low like a man, but feminine in a very curious tone, and still like the voice of a man.

A man in the audience said, "Whew, and she's a singer. Rotten like garbage."

"Now we have a dance by five girls."

Five girls, dressed in shimmering black, lined with pink, came out of the doorway and started a dance, peppy and tuneful. The swing band played on very fast, keeping in time with the







nimble feet. The graceful swung their feet in graceful movements, their hands flying through air. They turned, dipped, and climaxed the dance with a dip and graceful bow. The audience applauded again.

By now many of the empty benches were filled, and more and more people came into the arena. Some got up and left. But the majority remained.

A young boy was introduced next, and he sang a popular song.

The floor show was cut short because of the lack of time.

"Now we will have the grand march," the master of ceremonies said, "and I know all of you will enjoy it."

The boys and girls lined up with their backs against the wall, the boys on one side, the girls on the other side. The band played a marching tune, and the master of ceremonies blew a whistle. The boys and girls came forward in single file, and when a boy met a girl in the middle of the room, each one turned, and the two became a couple. The couples marched around the room again, and when they came to the middle of the room, they became four in a row, two boys and two girls. These four marched around the room again, and at the middle of the room they became eight people. On and on they went, until the marchers were again one long line.

The one long line marched close to the audience, then all made a left turn, and marched around in crawling and snake-like fashion all over the room, twisting and turning, revolving in concentric circles around and around they went. Then the



the boys and girls lined up opposite each other, and formed a bridge, by holding each other hands. The first couple knelt down and crawled through the tunnel-like hole. The audience clapped their hands loudly. The loud jazz music echoed throughout the entire building.

The cigarette smoke filled the air. The bright electric lights glared down from above.

Then suddenly the ~~music~~ music changed to a dance tempo and the marchers ~~grapped~~ hold of whomever they could, and danced with him.

All the dancers danced in a sort of collegiate style. Kicking and pushing their nimble toes up and down in rapid tempo.

Then the music stopped again, and the dancers became walkers, walking around and around the highly polished floor, no signs of tiring and being exhausted by the hard physical workout they had been through.

The walkers walked around, again and again. The spectators wondered why, for what, for what? Some for the fun, others for the prize, but they all enjoyed it, no doubt.

A man in the audience said, "It all seems so silly to me, wasting all this energy and time in doing such things."

The woman beside him said, "You just don't understand such things."

The man kept quiet.

And still they kept at it, the walkers, around they went, forever. This was their ninth, <sup>day</sup> and many more days were to come, how many more days more, they do not care. Somehow







the spectators sensed the futility, the timeless and endless revolving of time.

The young girls smiled, and their boy companions smiled back, each determined to outwalk the other, to outdistance the other, to be the final winner, triumph at last.

The reserved seats were now well filled, although many of the benches in the gallery were still empty.

Once more the bang swung into marching music, and the contestants lined up in single file, and marched straight up to the audience, one by one. They went around the whole building, their steps in complete rhythm with the music. Then they marched back once more into the highly polished floor, to continue their endless walking, forever walking. Around  
~~around~~ and around.

At the command of the master of ceremonies, the walking contestants again twisted themselves into revolving figures, going around like a snake, forming circles, spreading out like a fan, ~~zigzagging~~ zigzagging all over the polished floor. Then they twisted themselves into a small knot, and slowly, slowly, spread out like a snail. The audience was delighted, cheering out loudly.

Then the <sup>big</sup> moment came. The master of ceremonies announced over the mike, "We will now have the marathon race. All those who participate in this race is allowed but fifteen minutes to make thirty-two laps around this track. Many will perhaps be eliminated. By the process of elimination, we will arrive at the final winner. I wish to explain to the audience here tonight, especially those who have never seen a Thrill-a-



then contest of how we conduct this. We wish to call from the audience some ladies and gentlemen to act as judges to help us out. Any lady or gentleman, please come forward."

Three men and two women came forward, and made their way over to the master of ceremonies, who was standing near the mike.

The master of ceremonies gave forth many instructions and told the men and women what to do.

"Now do you understand everything? If you don't, say so now, so we will avoid having any mistakes later."

The men and women nodded their heads, stating that they understood everything.

"We will now introduce the contestants," the master of ceremonies announced in a loud voice.

"The first is a young couple from New York City."

Loud hands clapped.

A young girl and boy, dressed in shorts and athletic clothes came forth, ran around the race track once. The second couple was introduced. Then the third. Six couples were participating in the event.

"The contestants will now go around the track once or twice to warm up. These one or two laps ~~do~~ not count."

The six couples, the boy holding the girl's hand, went around the track once, then twice.

"All right, ready!"

The young couples walked around slowly, very slowly. Around they went, again and again. None was running yet.

Two beds were placed in the center of the ring, and



about this, we wish to call your

attention to the fact that

and gentlemen to get as

early as possible, please come forward."

and two women came forward, and made their

presentation of themselves, who were standing near

the master of ceremonies gave them many questions

and told the men and women what to do.

"Now do you understand everything? If you don't, say

so now, so we will avoid having any mistakes later."

The men and women passed their names to the

master of ceremonies.

"We will now introduce the contestants," the master

of ceremonies announced in a loud voice.

"The first is a young couple from New York City."

"The contestants will now go around the track once or

twice to warm up. There are two laps to be run."

The six couples, the boy holding the girl's hand, went

around the track once, then twice.

"All right, ready?"



two nurses, two doctors were in attendance.

The two nurse were handing out wet towels to the running contestants. The contestants wiped their faces, then threw the ~~these~~ towels on the floor where the young nurses picked them up.

The young contestants were beginning to pick up speed, little by little. They were in a running gait, faster and faster they went. The audience <sup>was</sup> were breathless, their mouths open <sup>ed</sup> in bewilderment and excitement.

Around and around they went, the young runners.

The perspiration gleaming out from their wet bodies, they continued on and on. Like a dream the ~~these~~ audience watched, fascinated, breathless.

The runners revolved around the floor like human machines.

Some were already showing signs of fatigue, their limp and listless steps, retarding their partner.

A young girl dropped out, flat on the floor, writhing to and fro. The young nurse came forward and put her on the white bed. The nurse put both her arms under her shoulder and gently lifted her up and down, two three times. Very quickly the girl regained her breath, and was running again.

One by one the runners fell, then regained their breath, then ran again. A fat girl was running, still running, and not yet once stopping or fainting from loss of breath. The spectators cheered her on, yelling, encouraging her.

Everyone of her companions <sup>fell</sup> once or more times, but still this fat girl was running on, showing no signs of failing or exhaustion.



But she did fall once. The audience sighed a sign of regret. Then it applauded the girl with generous clapping.

The runners were to run fifteen minutes, yet in this breathless and timeless race, it seemed, the minutes were like hours, never ending, so far away.

Around and around the runners ran, the judges kept a close watch in the count, watching, checking all the time. The master of ceremonies fired a gun to signify that there were but two minutes left. The runners raced forward miraculously, running very fast around the track.

The audience stodd up, cheering, whistling, calling out names.

"Attaboy."

"Give it to him."

"Get going, you slow polk."

The runners were immune to this talk, their only goal was to make at least thirty-two laps around the track before the fifteen minutes were up. They ran on, spurred by the goal of ~~success~~ success.

The remaining two minutes of running were like an hour. Still the racers ran on and on, toward success.

The the gun was fired. It was the end of the race.

The completely exhausted runners fell to floor, in a heap. Their moving chests heaved up and down, up and down.

The nurse and doctors took care of them, carrying some to the rest rooms.

"All right, ladies and gentlemen, we will wait awhile to check the results to see if any of the contestants has been







eliminated or not."

Meanwhile the floors were being cleared for the second half of the floor show.

Many of the spectators began to get up from their seats.

The judges huddled together to check the results, checking and rechecking to make no mistakes.

Many had left by now, and the arena was half empty.

The announcer said, "Everyone of the contestants came through, and none has been eliminated."

The audience clapped their hands loudly, cheerfully.

The floors were now clear.

The second half of the floor show started.

Outside it was raining very hard, the rain even audible inside of the building.

The spectators began to go away, before the rain was any worse.

After the floor show the contestants walked around the floor again. Forever until the final day, until the last pair alone is left on the floor.

Timeless and deathless they seemed, the marchers, the walkers, the dancers of the Thrill-a-thon contest.

To them all this is a thrill, and they shall be doing it for the fun, for the publicity, for the money. So around and around they shall go, forever amidst the suffering and sadness of the universe.

They are the one who have fun and laughter.

To them the Thrill-a-thon is a thrill indeed.

They shall go around the track forever, deathless and timeless, forever.

last show.

The spectators began to get up from their seats.

They had left by now, and the arena was half empty.  
The announcer said, "Everyone of the contestants is  
here, and none has been eliminated."  
The audience clapped their hands loudly, cheerfully.  
The lights were on floor.  
The second half of the floor was started.

Outside it was raining very hard, the rain was  
falling on the sidewalk.

The spectators began to go away, before the rain was up.

After the floor show the contestants were called to the

stage. However, not all the girls were there.

The winner was the girl.

However, she did not win the prize, the money, she

was a member of the first team only.

So that all this was a thrill, and they were all

for the fun, for the prize, for the money. So around

### Hungry Companions

The grayness of the waterfront was dreary, and the dark fog was so thick that I could not see over to the other side of the estuary. I turned the coat collar of my ragged coat up to my neck. The cold wind which blew in from the bay was chill, and the black green water of the estuary swirled around in great puddles, then disappeared under the raised up platforms. The day became <sup>o</sup>cloudy, and thick threatening clouds covered the blue sky in a misty veil of darkness.

I looked out into the open water. Silent ships stood near the wharves, empty, alone, forgotten, their ghosts hovering nearby. Occasionally a small tug boat spurted by, then disappeared into the distance, and I heard the thudding noise no more, and all was silent again. The upraised bridge that opened in the middle whenever a boat went by loomed out dark and ominous. I stood near the water and looked out into the cold, gray atmosphere, no place to go, nothing to do. The last few dollars that I possessed lay in my pocket, and my hand held them tight, <sup>by</sup> afraid of losing them.

Out of the thick fog a great freight ship came by, very close, and I saw it drifting away so <sup>alone</sup> ~~along~~ and silent. From the silence the wailing of a fog horn blew out. The bridge <sup>e</sup>opened slowly to let the ship pass. Then slowly the ship passed over, and the bridge began to close. All this, combined with the sad dripping day, made me feel uncomfortable, to make me understand





what it was to be homeless, with no place to go, no work to do. The ship drifted away like a phantom, and when I looked again, it was down at the other end of the estuary heading toward San Francisco.

The weather was getting dark, and soon I had to go someplace, somewhere. I could hear the lapping of the water, and the sound of falling wet leaves as the wind scattered them into the dark ground. The automobiles and cars rushed across the bridge, all moving, going somewhere, someplace, and suddenly I felt melancholy<sup>and</sup> alone.

This continuous wandering from city to city, state to state was getting harder and difficult to endure. Especially now in the winter when the ~~weather~~<sup>weather</sup> was cold. No jobs, nothing, they all said, even here in the big city, I found nothing to do. I knew how it felt to be hungry, and terribly tired by exhaustion and exposure to the winter air. Those long rides on trains and freight cars still lingered fresh in my memory. I knew how it felt to be homeless, like a wandering vagabond, going from place to place, city to city, and still unable to settle down. Hunger that gnawed at my belly, thirst that parched my throat, all these were familiar sensations that I had felt many times. Now after one long year I am still on the road. When is this going to end, I wonder.

The fog settled close to the water, and now the houses and boats were covered with a strange whiteness. Darkness began to come over the waterfront. I looked up at the sky.

Rain would be falling soon.



My hands were numb with coldness, and many times I put them well into my pockets to keep them warm. A slight trickle of rain was falling, and I got up from where I sat and started toward the town. I did not realize that the hours had passed by so quickly, so drearily. It was almost six in the evening.

I passed old broken down houses almost crumbling to pieces near the waterfront. Many empty lots filled with old junk and corroded iron stood out prominently. Pile upon pile of old wooden boxes spread over everywhere. Now I was passing close to the freight yards. The silent cars stood there like ghosts of something forgotten, alone, and the spiders had taken advantage of them and built their nests there. There was an aloneness about the whole dreary scene. Strange silent freight cars remained there like phantoms of far away.

A light rain was falling now, and the wet raindrops began to appear in small sparks on the sidewalks and soon the ground was wet.

I began to walk toward the town. The streets were deserted now, and there was no one in sight. The emptiness of the whole atmosphere bore a lonely feeling to me. The whole sky darkened rapidly, and I walked faster. I wished to get to some shelter before it started to pour. I hastened my footsteps.

It was at this moment that I saw a lonely young girl huddling close to the side of a wooden building. How long she had been there I did not know. It just happened that her bright red hat caught my attention, and when I looked at





her, she was staring at me, her eyes smiling, but I could see a heaviness lurking behind the apparent smile. She was a small woman, more of a young girl I should say, but her face and condition told me that she had suffered and the suffering had added years to her face. She was poorly dressed in a long overcoat of a light green color. Her face was painted with red rouge and her lips curved in a perfect cupid's bow. She kept looking at me trying to catch my attention. I turned away from her, but when I looked again, she was still looking at me, her eyes following me wherever I went. I paid no attention to her. Then she tried her professional tricks, walking close to me and passing looks over her shoulders, trying to see if I noticed her or not. A faint trace of perfume came to my nostril. The appearance of her back was slim and graceful, but when she turned her face, the synthetic rouge and lipstick spoiled the illusion.

It became known to me what she was trying to do. But I was so troubled by my thoughts and feelings that I tried not to look at her. She followed me along for a few blocks. Then I began to walk toward the waterfront again. A few lights appeared on the city outskirts. The black water of the estuary glimmered and beckoned. I began to approach it so as to avoid the lady. I turned around to see if she was following me, but she was not in sight. Immediately I began to go toward the town again, knowing that the lady perhaps had gone away. The rain had stopped now, but everywhere it was wet and cold. I wanted to find someplace where it was warm and comfortable.



It was at this moment that I heard a big splash as if something had fallen in the water. Then a loud voice called out into the silence. I rushed back to the place where I just left. A few feet away the young lady who had followed me was struggling in the cold water. Her head bobbed out, then disappeared. It was so dark that I could hardly see anything. She did not yell anymore. Hastily I jumped into the water and pulled her out. I felt the cold water soaking into my skin. But in this moment of terror I hardly felt the coldness at all. I finally managed to pull myself out, and it was a hard time to pull the girl out too.

I could see fright in her face which had suddenly become a pale blue and green because of the washed-off makeup. Her face was all wet with water, but tears began to eke out from her eyes. She panted for breath, then she sobbed again and again. Moment after moment it was getting colder. I did not know what to do with her, and there was no one around there at this time of the night. I could see that except for the fact that the young lady was greatly frightened she was not in any serious condition. Her breath came back to her somewhat. She kept pointing to a purse <sup>which</sup> ~~she~~ was tied around her hands. I opened it. She pointed to a card. I saw <sup>by</sup> ~~my~~ the address there that she was not far from her house. She was able to walk after awhile. She shivered a great deal. I held on to her for she did not walk like one who had strength. Soon we reached her house. It was poorly lighted, almost crumpling into pieces. The door was not locked. Inside a nauseating feeling came into my nostrils. A smell of





strong medicine caused a very unpleasant odor in the room.

The rain was now pouring down in bucketfull. It made a steady loud noise on the wooden roof. I could see that the girl was exhausted. Her whole body trembled with the coldness. Water dripped down her face and unto the floor. Then suddenly she burst out crying. I could see that worries and anxiety had gathered to an unbearable point for her, and now the moment had come for her to release all the feelings and emotions which she had not yet <sup>found</sup> ~~find~~ the time to give out.

And as suddenly as she started to cry she stopped. It was at this moment that she really realized what she had done. By this time the room was warm with heat. She was like a little creature now, not frightened, but unable to understand that she was still here and that someone had really saved her. I saw gratitude in her eyes.

With her makeup washed off, her face was gaunt and pale. The curls in her hair had <sup>been</sup> straightened out by the water. It gave her an appearance of being thinner <sup>than</sup> ~~that~~ she really was.

Once more she broke out crying again. Her thin shoulders shook, and the hot tears rolled down her cheeks. She looked extremely pale now, her face completely white.

"You better get into some dry clothes," I told her.

She got up slowly and went into her room. She was still unsteady. When she came out again, she was dressed in a loosely wrapped robe. She came close to the stove and sat down. By the fire light I could see that beneath the harshness of her face, she could not be more than twenty-one or two.



When I asked her what her name was, she simply said, "Daisy." She did not know what more to say at the moment, so she remained quiet.

"When is it that you ate last?" I asked her.

"Yesterday morning," she said slowly, not looking at me.

Somehow I felt sorry for her, seeing her sitting there so pathetic, slowly stroking the white cat with tender care.

I began to feel a little strange. Neither of us could find anything to say. Outside it was raining, and it was warm inside. She looked at me, and then I looked at her.

Then I got up. I didn't know why I said it, but I did.

"I buy you something," I told her, "you just wait."

She smiled faintly and nodded. A light came into her listless eyes.

I went outside into the wet street. It was still raining. This part of the city so close to the waterfront<sup>+</sup> was very obscure, and it was hard to see anything in the darkness. I had to make my way carefully over the broken street. The ground was wet and if I had walked any faster I would have fallen many times.

I went into a small Jap store and purchased a bottle of milk, a small loaf of bread, and a box of crackers. Then I hurried back to the house. I put the package I was carrying under the flap of my coat to protect it against the rain. When I reached the house Daisy was at the door waiting.

"Take off your wet clothes and dry them," she said as I handed her the package of food. I was completely soaked. My old felt hat was dripping with the cold rain water. I took off my coat and sweater and hung them on the back of a chair.





I sat down on a small stool near the fire. The heat warmed me instantly and I felt better. The room was warm and comfortable. Daisy was making some hot milk. She was more like her ownself now, being more talkative, and once in <sup>awhile</sup> ~~awhile~~ she even laughed out loud at what I said. I think that she had forgotten about her plunge into the river.

Her body was thin and dissipated under her robe. She was frail and used, I could see. She must have suffered a great deal of torture and trouble just because she could not make a living any other way. She moved around the room now freely. She was so weak with hunger that she cut the bread with trembling hands. I sat there watching her. We ate in silence, and only the sound of the wind and rain could be heard. Daisy ate her food slowly, enjoying every bit of it. After awhile she said, "I really don't know how to thank you. I really don't know what would have happened to me if you weren't near to help me."

"I guess both of us are in the same fix. I think I would have done the same thing if I have no place to turn to."

I stared at Daisy, wondering how she ever came to lead this sort of life. She sensed what I was thinking about.

"Yeah, I know," she said, "this is a rotten game, but a person got to live and eat."

"Yeah, a person got to live and eat," I said.

As the evening wore on, Daisy began to talk more and more freely. I could tell by the way she talked that underneath her hard boiled exterior there was a heart which longed for



something better.

"It must be terribly lonely, sometimes," I said.

"Yeah," Daisy said. "Let's talk about you," she remarked.

"There's really nothing to talk about," I said.

The rain was coming down in torrents and the heavy cold wind gushed into the kitchen. The gas flame flickered and then died out. Daisy got up and closed the window. Both of us felt warm and contented. The rain droned on with a monotonous rhythm that made us sleepy. We seemed to understand each other. We talked about all sorts of subjects. And very soon I was surprised at myself telling Daisy about everything about my life. She told me all about herself, and how ~~her~~ father quarreled with her mother whenever he got drunk, and how finally the family was scattered away.

"I ran away when I was seventeen," she said, "but he was like all the rest of them. After they got tired of you they threw you over for someone else." There was a bitter expression on her eyes.

"You must have led a rather tough life," I said.

She didn't say anything. After awhile she said, "Sometimes I wish I was free of all this, this life of hunger and bitter sorrow."

"And you can't?" I said.

"I try many times, but I can't! Somehow I always come back to it."

The fire was dying down, and Daisy got up and put some more paper in the fire. The light flickered out in her face, and once when I turned she caught my gaze and smiled. This





time I smiled back. Then Daisy turned around and each of us was quiet.

It is hard to explain what each of us was thinking about at that moment. Only we felt that we had discovered an understanding of each other, and that one understands the other clearly.

Outside the rain continued falling, but for the moment both Daisy and I had forgotten about it. I had a desire just then to hold her near me and tell her that everything is all right, and that there is no cause to worry anymore. And I was sure that Daisy wanted to lean her shoulder near me and feel that someone was protecting her. However, we sat facing each other, and we did not dare to look at each other anymore.

Somehow I found in her a comfort and thrill that were denied me for so long. I didn't know why I wanted to hold her tightly near me, but at that moment I was no longer lonely, and I was sure that Daisy was not lonely either.

The rain continued to fall, but morning was still a long way off.

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XLIII

For a very long time the woman had been suffering from stomach trouble, sharp excruciating pains which bothered her uncomfortably. She was poor, and she could not afford any medical aid. Therefore, she went to a public doctor, and the doctor informed her that she must have an operation, otherwise serious trouble might arise.

The woman consented and an operation was performed on her while she was in the midst of great pain. The woman recovered from her first venture, but soon her stomach bothered her again, and this time a second operation was performed in a public hospital again. She recovered from this. But again she was in trouble. A third operation was performed.

She was extremely weak after this critical ordeal, and she lay in bed, pale and exhausted. Then one night she fell asleep. The members of the house thought that she was sleeping natural, <sup>ly</sup> but in the night she began to utter strange sounds, like one talking in one's sleep. This awakened the husband. He opened the light and saw the face of his wife extremely white, ghostly. He became afraid, and he called to her.

She did not answer, but she kept on mumbling, uttering strange sounds. Her face was white.

The husband began to call out loud, but the wife did not answer. The man became afraid, and he called the son up, and this son then telephoned for an ambulance. All the time the wife remained in the bed, muttering. Her face very white.

<sup>minutes</sup>  
The-~~days~~ passed by, but still no ambulance had come yet. The husband sent the boy down to the city hall in the deep night. The son did what the father told him to do.





But when the boy reached the city hall, they told him that the ambulance had already left. The boy went home, running. He reached home just in time to see the men taking his mother out into the ambulance.

The boy and the father went along too. All this time the mother was still mumbling, and her face was white, white. Then the mother was taken to an emergency hospital.

After the mother had regained her consciousness, her color slowly returned to her cheeks.

She said, "I felt something pulling me down. All the time I felt something pulling me, down. I tried to call out, but I can't. I tried to say something, but I can't. I can<sup>hear</sup> something drumming into my ears, and everything is confused, faces, hands, all sorts of odds and ends."

The father told the wife, "You had a very close call. If you have not waken, perhaps ~~h~~hat would have been your last sleep."

The wife shuddered a little. She would never forget that strange experience in her life. Never.



### Talk with Father

Dad, I didn't want to bother you, but I saw the light in your room. You don't mind if I talk to you, do you, Dad? I just got to talk to you about something, I just got to. I...I...I don't know how to say it...I...

Tell me, son. There's nothing that you can't speak to me about.

You know, you remember the boy that came up here a few weeks ago. Well, Ben's my closest friend, and I go everywhere with <sup>him</sup> ~~you~~. You remember him, don't you Dad?

Yes, the nice looking boy with the blonde hair.

Yes, that's him. He comes over here often, sometimes with other boys. Well, you see...we went to a show the other day...but...but that's not what I want to ask you...about something, something...you know...I don't know how to say it.

Michael, what are you trying to tell me?

I'm coming to that. About Ben and I. He's my best friend. We go everywhere together, to school, to show, everyplace. He...he tells me everything about himself. You know his dad, he's a big business man. He makes lots of money...well, his dad gives him money to spend, lots of it.

You want more money to spend, is that it, Michael?

No, Dad, no...not that. Really, I got enough to spend. I don't need anymore. That's not it. It's something else.

What is it, Michael? Tell me. I got work to do.

I'm sorry if I bother you, Dad, but...but it's about... about...Ben and I. No, I didn't mean that. It's just about





Ben. You must believe me, it's just about him.

What about Ben, son?

He's in trouble. He didn't tell anyone but me. He didn't even tell his dad about it. His mother, she doesn't know. He...he just couldn't tell. They wouldn't understand about it. You know their folks a little, don't you, Dad? They are kind of strict. I mean they're people that don't like trouble or anything like that. They're quiet and reserved, and they think a lot about Ben. They're good people, really they're good people. Ben is swell, I like him a lot. He's in trouble now and I can't let him down...you know that, don't you, Dad? If you like a person a great deal, you do anything to help him, anything, wouldn't you, Dad?

I guess I would, son.

Ben...he didn't want to let anyone know. But he told me. He didn't know what to do...he asked me...well, he asked me to ask you...you might know something about it. It's not his fault, really it isn't, Dad. It's because of those boys that he goes around with. They're no good. They really got him into trouble. They made fun of him. But Ben told me everything. He thought maybe I or you...perhaps we might be able to help him. You must promise me, Dad, you must not tell anyone. Not to anyone, not even to Mother. You understand, don't you?

Yes, son.

It all happened so suddenly. Ben didn't know it would end like that. But those boys told him that nothing would happen anyway. It's the first time that he had ever done it. He couldn't help it.



And he doesn't know what to do. He doesn't dare let his folks find out. There must be something that he could do...there must be. He thought that nothing would result from it. Just the other day he found out. He really doesn't love the girl, and she doesn't care for him. She told him about it. The girl's parents don't know either. Oh, Dad, you got to help him. There is no one that he could turn to.

Son, I realize that your friend is in a bad position. He'll suffer ~~consequences~~<sup>consequences</sup> like that if he continues with this sort of thing. Thanks heavens, Michael, you're not in trouble.

Why...no...Dad, of course not. No...I didn't, Dad. I went to a show that night, yes, I remember. Ben told me that they, he and the girl, were going to drive around for a while. I didn't go with him, honest I didn't.

Son, why are you telling me all this?

Because...because I want to help Ben. He's so worried... he's in trouble...and he doesn't know what to do. He's afraid that his folks will find out. He really doesn't want to let them know. It would break his mother's heart to find out. Something has to be done. I'm the only one to know about it. Ben he told me not to tell anyone, but maybe you, Dad, maybe you could tell him what to do. You know what he ought to do, don't you, Dad?

It seems to be the most intelligent thing to do is to come forward with the whole matter and not keep it a secret any longer. Then perhaps a solution could be determined.





Oh, no, Dad...no, that wouldn't be...that can't be. I mean...I mean he can't do that. He can't marry her. He doesn't love her. It...it's just one of those things that happened.

How long ago was that, son?

A few months ago. The girl was <sup>now</sup> definite...now she's knows it. It's too late to do anything <sup>now</sup> ~~about~~. And she's ashamed to see a doctor. Now it's too late to do anything about it. Ben's really in trouble, Dad. There must be something that can be done, there must be...it can't go on like this any longer. Ben's really miserable...he seems so different he isn't his ownself anymore. Dad, there must be something that can be done.

Michael, you are telling me the truth about Ben, aren't you?

Why, yes, Dad...why should I lie to you. No, I'm not making it up. It's all true.

If you could bring Ben up here in the morning, I would like to speak to him.

No, Dad...you couldn't do that. I mean...I mean... why should you? He...he doesn't want anyone to embarrass him...I I...told him...you can't speak to him...you can't. I can't let mother know about me...I mean...I mean...I can't let her know that I know about Ben. It's getting late...I got to go to bed...I have to wake up early tomorrow...don't speak to Ben, Dad...I'll talk to him myself...good night, Dad.

Michael, what is the matter with you? Michael, why don't <sup>answer</sup> you ~~ask~~ me? Michael!

Good night, Dad...I can't speak anymore.



Michael, come back here. You're not telling the truth .

Are you in trouble yourself?

Goodnight Dad. I can't talk anymore.

Michael, Michael!

I can't talk anymore, not tonight.

Michael...





### Laments of the Misunderstood One

Oh, Will, I'm so glad that you're at home. I phoned you this afternoon, but your mother said that you weren't home. But anyway, I'm glad you are because I really got to talk to you. You <sup>are</sup> the only real friend that I have, and I know you will understand. There's no one else that understands me like you do. Tell me the truth, Will, am I really very hard to get along with? No, oh, I'm so glad to hear you say that. You're a real friend, and I have so few of them. I really don't know why I'm always saying things to hurt people. Tell me, Will, do I say things to hurt people and not know it? What! Sometimes I do. Are you telling me the truth? Really, I never know I'm like that. You have always been frank with me, Will, and I'm going to be frank with you. I suppose I say things to hurt you too. What did you say, Will? I do! Why, I could hardly believe it. When? Oh, just little things that I'm not conscious of. To tell you the truth, Will, I really can't help it. You see, I have always been like that, saying things, doing things in my own peculiar way. Honestly, my family has criticized me many times, but I never paid any attention to it. I am told that I have no manners, and that I have no respect for other people. People even say that I'm impertinent, can you beat that? Oh, Will, why am I always making myself misunderstood. Maybe I ought to change over and be somebody entirely different from my real self. I just can't help doing things that I am used to. But to tell you the truth, Will, I never meant any harm to anyone.



*disrespectful*  
~~disrespectful~~

Am I really impudent and ~~disrespectful~~ of other people, Will?

You really don't think I'm like that, do you? You mean I

give that impression sometimes? Oh, Will, what must some people think of me? Calling me that impudent young man.

They must think I'm a terrible person, terribly cruel and hard and stubborn. To tell you the truth, Will, I have been

told by my family that I'm terribly stubborn, very hard to get along with, but I never really care, Will. Maybe that

is why I'm always getting myself misunderstood. I really think it is so easy to misunderstand someone, don't you, Will?

Maybe that's why I have so many enemies, Will. I really like to get along with people, but it always has been very difficult

for me. Perhaps I am to blame, Will, for I seem always to be doing the wrong thing at the wrong time. But that's me

Will, I can't help it. I have always been like that. I always play prank on people to see whether they can take it or not.

Maybe that's what wrong with me. Maybe I ought to acquire a lot of good manners, how to say good morning, good night,

*how*  
~~not~~ to introduce people and feel at ease. But I can't, Will.

I got to do things in my own way, be myself. I guess I have too much independence, yes, that must be it. Too much indepen-

dence. But Will, you seem to be the only one that understands me. You're the only real friend I have. I really don't know

why I do the things that I do sometimes, or say the things

I do. It just come<sup>s</sup>, and just like that I lost a friend. But

it is all so innocent, Will, and once a friend is lost, it is

hard to explain, isn't it? But you really understand me, Will,

that's why I could talk to you like this. I guess I ought to







listen to my family. They tried to help me many times, but I paid no attention, because I just got to do things in my own way. People say I'm stubborn, say I'm impertinent, say I have no manners, but I never seem to pay any attention to anyone. I know I ought to, but I don't. Maybe that's why I'm always getting into trouble. But really, Will, I don't feel bitter toward anyone. I don't really hate anyone. Sometimes I feel that I have no friends in the world, Will, except you. That's why I'm able to talk to you like this. I know you will understand me, Will. Well, I guess it's just myself.

All my life I have independence in what I do or say. I do and say things that no one else would ever do, it seemed. Most of the things I do seem to be wrong. Most of the things I say seem to be wrong. Oh, Will, why can't I be like other people that is always right and never make mistakes. Why can't I be like other people that say the right things at the right time. What did you say, Will? Oh, you said it takes all kind of people to make the world. I heard that one before, Will. Tell me, Will, do you really think I over do what I say or do? Oh, you think I do sometimes. I'm so glad you told me, Will. If anyone else were to say that, I would give him a punch in the snuzzle. But you have always been frank with me, Will, and I know that you won't lie to me. Oh, Will, sometimes I think I don't even know <sup>what</sup> I say or do. The most innocent things I do are misunderstood and cause trouble. The truth is Will, that I <sup>am</sup> ~~am~~ not conscious of what I say or do. And unless people tell me that I do



wrong, I would not know it. Oh, Will, I really think I ought to change over completely and be like you. What? You don't want me to. Oh, Will, I admire you very much. I admire your manners, your <sup>respect</sup> ~~respect~~ of other people. I want people to say that I <sup>am</sup> just like Will, the person who never offends anyone. I would like to be like you, Will, I really would. You mean I wouldn't be myself then, is that what you mean? I think you don't understand, Will. I mean perhaps I ought to control myself a little. I ought to know my faults and do away with them. See, you understand now? You do, I'm so glad. So you agree with me. I think I'm going to start out today and found out what's wrong with me. I'm going to find out what's wrong with me. Then perhaps no one would say that I'm impertinent or disrespectful, would they, Will? I guess I must have given that impression many times without being conscious of it. But you know, Will, I never have deliberately try to hurt anyone, don't you, Will? I'm so glad to hear you say that, Will. After all, I just can't go on having people dislike me, can I, Will? You've been so understanding. I think you understand me more than I know myself. You're a real friend, Will. Sometimes I don't know <sup>what</sup> to do without you. You're the only one I could turn to, sometimes. You really want me to discuss my problems with you, don't you? I will always do that, Will. Your advice is so sound and intelligent. What did you say, Will? You mean you think I'm a little outspoken at times? Also that I say things in a very biting way? I really must be more careful of my speech from now on. You know, Will, if I haven't told you





all this, I would probably still go on insulting people, being impudent and stubborn as I have been told to be. But as long as you are my friend, what do I care what the rest of the world think? What, I shouldn't take such an attitude? Oh, Will, I really shouldn't. That shows what I mean. I always saying things that I meant in a different way. I promise you, Will, I try to change over and be a different person. Then we will see what happen, Will.

I'll try, I'll earnestly try, but it's going to be so hard. I haven't bore you with all this talk, have I, Will? Oh, you so understandable. You're a feal frænd, Will. What time is it? Goodness, I didn't know it was so late. I really must be going home. I'm going to start tonight to change over, Will. I'll try earnestly, yes, I honestly will try to. Well, I'll be seeing you soon. Goodbye, Will. Goodbye.



I didn't know how I know it, but I did. Perhaps it was so good for a first story that I got suspicious of it, and even then I did not know for sure, but somehow I got a slight hunch that it was so.

Then I found out that I was right, proving again, that I sometimes could think things, and they would come out exactly the way I knew it would. Take that time for instance when I was walking near the State Theatre. Suddenly I got a vibration that I am going to receive something, and sure enough when I got back home, my mother told me that a package had arrived for me from New York. I don't know why it is like this. It happened to me many times, and almost always it proves that my mind somehow could think things in advance. I'm not boasting at all. It is true.

Well, I knew it. The story of course, the first story by Alvin B. Harmon in the June, 1935 Esquire. It is titled, "The Perlu." And I was right about it.

It happened like this, if you want to know about it. I happened to pass by the news stand on Twelve and Franklin when I saw a large magazine with an interesting cover. The Magazine was called "Esquire." And it was fifty cents a copy. I brought a copy of it, and I went right home and read it. It was an interesting magazine except that there were too many advertisements in it. And there were many sophisticated sexy cartoons. Hot stuff, but very cleverly handled with <sup>out</sup> offending anyone but the very squeamish. Better keep your Aunt Emma away from it. Well, I began to read through the magazine until I came to this Perlu story. Gee, it was swell, and then I read in





the introduction page that the author, Mr. Harmon is thirty-four years old, and that he went to a naval school, and that "The Perla" was his first accepted story by a magazine. There was a page picture of him on the page, on page twenty-two to be sure, and the picture was quite well photographed, and no one would think by looking at the picture that the author was one who plagiarized other people's stories.

Well, I read all through the story, and somehow, I got the feeling that it wasn't right. Wasn't right in the sense that I seemed to have a vague feeling that the story was that of someone else. I can't explain. Perhaps I have read the original story long ago, and forgotten all about it. But somehow that feeling that the story was plagiarized remain<sup>ed</sup> in my mind.

And then the next month, in a writer's magazine I found out that over two hundred people wrote in stating that the story was a steal from Ambrose Bierce's "The Damned Thing." Was I proud of myself? I never read the story by Ambrose Bierce. But somehow I knew that the story which is a steal from it was a stolen piece of goods. I still don't know how I got that impression, but I did.

It is one of those numerous things that always happened to me, and that I can't explain. Sometimes I sit in my room, and suddenly I would feel, feel something around me, something that would tell me that such and such a thing would happen. And many times it did, much to my amazement.

What I don't understand is why anyone would dare steal another person's stories, for they would get caught sooner



or later. If the original author does not discover~~ed~~ the plagiarized piece, then some reader would, you could be sure of that. You cannot get away with it. You get caught sooner or later.

So Mr. Harmon<sup>W</sup> literary career is ruined completely. I still could not think why he is so dumb as to steal somebody else's story. He thought that readers are dumb, and would not know, but the magazines readers are not dumb, you can be sure of that.

I still can't get over it. I didn't know how I know that that story was not right. But I was correct, and can you blame me for being proud?

My advice to all writers is this then. Don't steal other people's stories. For you will get caught, so beware. Perhaps I would be the one to catch you, and wouldn't that be embarrassing?

Don't be another Mr. Harmon. Just be yourself and you probably would get somewhere in the writing world, and that probably means nowhere. Ho. Hum.





Jack opened the door of the doctor's office, and entered inside, sitting down on the hard straw chair. I sat down beside him. The nurse was busily typkng a long statement. She looked at us out of the corner of her eyes, then resumed her typing.

When she finished she said, "Which one of you wishes to see the doctor?"

Jack said, "I do."

"This is your first time here?"

"Yes," Jack said.

"Your address?"

"776 Brush Street."

"Telephone?"

"No telephone."

The nurse continued with her work. The telephone rang. The nurse answered it, then went inside. She came out again and hung the telephone up.

An old man and a woman came in. They sat in the next room. A young boy came in, and sat directly opposite us.

The nurse looked up.

"Hello, Bill," she said.

"Hello" Bill answered.

Bill sat there very quiet, almost motionless, his hands on his cheeks, his body slumped down on the soft sofa. His eyes stared down at the floor.

I looked at him. His face was familiar to me. I was sure that I saw him somewhere before. Suddenly I got that peculiar feeling that I was doing the same thing the same



time somewhere before. Then I realized that Bill was the same person that I saw last year at Doctor Grant's office. And the year before that.

He looked exactly like the first time that I saw him.

Bill got up and went into the other room. He was looking at a magazine.

"You know <sup>who</sup> ~~what~~ that was?"

Jack looked at me.

"Who?"

"That was Bill."

"Well?"

"I saw him here last year."

"Well?"

"And the year before that?"

Jack looked puzzled. "What has all this got to do with me?"

"Nothing," I said.

"Then why do you tell me?"

"Oh, I don't know."

Jack picked up the papers, and glanced at it.

The door opened, and a nurse came out.

"All right, Bill. The first room."

Bill got up tired and exhausted. He smiled.

He went inside, and the door closed.

I asked the nurse, "Is Bill still coming up here?"

"Yes," she said.

"It's been a long time."

"Yes."

"Is he any better?"





"I think so, he looks better."

The nurse typed again.

The clock ticked away. A half hour passed. The doctor did not come yet. Jack was tired of waiting.

He asked the nurse, "How much longer do I have to wait?"

"We expect the doctor any minute now."

"Oh, I guess I'll wait."

More people came into the office. The whole room was full. Two men had to stand up, and a child sat on a woman's lap. The room was hot.

The door opened, and the nurse announced, "All right, Jack." Jack and I got up, and went inside. The doctor was here already.

The doctor prescribed some medicine for Jack. We went outside into the corridor. At the same moment Bill came out, his face flushed after his electric treatment.

"Do you remember me?" I said to Bill.

"Yes, I do," Bill said. "I saw you at the office two three times."

"How are you?"

"Oh, all right, I guess." His face clouded.

"That's good," I said.

The three of us walked down the hall toward the elevator.

Bill pushed the button marked "down."

"This is my friend Jack, Bill. Jack, this is Bill."

They shook hands.

"Do you always come up here?"

"Not now. I come sometimes."



"A few times a week?"

"That's right," Bill said. "I guess I have to keep coming until I'm well."

"It's been a long time."

"I know."

A red light flashed on. The elevator's door opened. We entered inside. The elevator dropped down. The door opened and we went outside.

"I'm going this way," Bill said.

"We're not <sup>going</sup> your way," I said.

"Well, goodbye," Bill said.

"Goodbye."

He crossed the street, then disappeared around the corner.

"He acted so strange," Jack said.

"The doctor expected him to die a year ago."

"Oh."

"But he didn't."

"Why?"

"He just didn't."

"Does Bill know?"

"No, the doctor didn't tell him."

"How did you know?"

"I heard the doctor talking about him before."

"He's dying now?"

"Maybe."

"Gee, I didn't know," Jack said.

"You know now," I said.

"Yes."

We walked down the street, the picture of Bill lingering in our minds.

"I know."

A red light flashed on. The elevator's door opened.

"Well, goodbye," Bill said.

"Goodbye."

He crossed the street, then if he dared around the corner.

"He acted as strange," Jack said.

"The doctor expected him to die a year ago."

"Oh."

"No, the doctor didn't tell him."

"How did you know?"

"Well, that's all."



Two scalding tears lingered at his eyelids, fell.

"What is the matter?" I said to the old man.

"My boy, you do not know what remembrances these little kittens brought to my mind. Ah, tragic, indeed."

"Well, pray, do tell me about them."

"My boy, it was like this. I am an old man. My Sarah died five years ago. I am only forty-five years of age, but look about fifty, caused by sadness and worrying of the last few years. I have no children, but all my life I had hoped that someday I shall have someone to carry on with my name after I passed away, but all that wish was never carried out. I had sons, yes, many sons, but all died. Life was cruel to me. Happiness was denied me, so that all the years of married life were a torture, no happiness or gayety.

"Two years after my marriage I had a son. The moment he came into the world, he was dead. I had waited two years for him, and I lost him. He meant more to me than money, fortune, or big houses, I had all of these, but I wished for a son. Perhaps two or three, but I had none.

"My wife was sad and weary after the baby passed away. She said to me, 'He is not dead. It couldn't be. Oh, I could not believe it. I want my baby! I want my baby!' I tried to calm her, but she insisted to see the child. They brought it to her and she held the little dead child tight in her arms while the tears dropped.

"Seeing her I could not control myself. After all, it was my child too. Poor Sarah was so miserable at the loss of the child. She tore at my heart strings with her love. I said



to her, 'Sarah darling, don't take it so hard. It is indeed unfortunate to have this happened to us. But he is dead. You are tired. You must conserve your strength and vilatily.' Then she drew me close to her and sobbed her heart out. How well I remember how it all happened.

"I went out to the backyard and sat on the chair. My first son was denied me. But I could have others. Nature could not be so cruel as to take all my sons away. Sarah and I were both very young then. I could not be more than thirty. Sarah was a little over twenty. She was beautiful, young and sweet. All in all, she was a little darling, if there ever was one. And I had loved her dearly. She died five years ago, and I have never been the same. Life seems so empty now. She left a big void in my heart.

"My boy, it is those three dead kittens lying so still over there that brought back all the remembrances to me. Somehow, I could not help it. They reminded me so much of something that happened. It caused Sarah death too.

"When Sarah died, I was alone. I was not myself anymore. I have no sons, and now my little Sarah was taken away from me. I had a bitterness in my heart. Life was cruel, unjust, so miserable. Ah, miserable to me, indeed.

"Since Sarah's death, I had kept to myself. That is, I no longer enjoyed outside life. Music, wine, woman, they no more were a fascination. In fact, to me, they were ugly. They were a veneer used to hide the ugliness of life. I began to see heart aches, drama, sadness. Joys I no longer knew.

"I was getting old, day after day, week after week, very old. My youth had flown, and I could not get it back. I did not try







to recapture it, as what use would it have been? None, whatsoever. I stayed in my house like a turtle in his shell. Occasionally I wandered into the midst of friendship, company, and music. I did not belong there. I belong<sup>ed</sup> to my little Sarah, far away.

"Four<sup>sons</sup> she gave, but none lived. You know, my boy, I did not think nature could be so very cruel. At least she might give me at least one. Not even one would she give me. Do you see why I am old, so desolate, alone? You are young, and you do not understand. But the time perhaps will come when whey you, too, will know what it means. Meanwhile you are happy. While I am sad.

"During these five years I have dreamt and hoped that perhaps somehow, I could get a little happiness. It was then that one day in the midst of my dreaming, there wandered into the yard a little white cat. She had spots of light yell<sup>ow</sup> hair on her head and tail. She walked so softly and gazed at me with such human eyes that I was immediately attract<sup>ed</sup> to her instantly. And I grew fonder of her the more she stayed at my side. I never knew where she came from.

"She became fond of me too. I gave her milk and good food to eat and she thrived and became a strong, healthy, beautiful cat. Often in my spare time, I talked to her. And she looked at me and purred. She act<sup>ed</sup> as if she really understood all that I said. The first few days that I had her she stayed out in the yard; she was afraid to come into the house. I sat at the window and threw pieces of meat and bones down to her<sup>and</sup> and she ate them greedily. I enjoyed myself watching her eat with so much pleasure. After a few days in the yard she gather<sup>ed</sup> courage and came close to

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
DIVISION OF THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS  
530 SOUTH EAST ASIAN AVENUE  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60607

TO: THE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20535

FROM: DR. J. J. HARRIS  
DIRECTOR, NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL FOR A JOINT PROJECT  
ON THE PHYSICS OF THE SOLID STATE

1. The purpose of this proposal is to describe the  
work which is being done in the Department of Physics  
at the University of Chicago in connection with the  
study of the properties of the solid state.

2. The work is being done in connection with the  
study of the properties of the solid state, and  
the results of the work are being published in the  
Journal of the American Physical Society.

3. The work is being done in connection with the  
study of the properties of the solid state, and  
the results of the work are being published in the  
Journal of the American Physical Society.

4. The work is being done in connection with the  
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me whenever I called to her. I called her Kitty. Soon she became accustomed to the name and came whenever I called or whenever I came out into the yard. Sometimes I let her come into the house and she went from one room to another. Soon she was so used to the inside of the house that she would not go out unless she needed some fresh air. Since the house was roomy and big, and since Kitty was a very clean cat, I let her stay.

"I grew to love the cat as though she were a human being. At times she amazed me because she actually seemed to know what I was thinking of sometime. When she saw that I was sad she came near me and looked me in the eyes. She pulled at the legs of my pants as though she wished to <sup>climb</sup> ~~climb~~ up into my lap and stayed there. Often I picked her up and slowly stroke her soft white hair and she curled herself into a ball and fell asleep right in my lap. She was really a nice cat.

"I lost some of sad and melancholy mood as the days went swiftly by. I was more of my old self. I noticed the grass, the flowers once more. And the wind, the spring, the stir of life. The little ants, the beetles.

"Kitty felt the mating instinct. She was to give birth to some little kittens soon. And I was glad for her. I could see and visioned the little baby cats playing around the yard and enjoying the sunshine.

"Kitty became round and full as the time to give birth to the little kittens drew near. I was eager to see the little kittens and see what they were like. One day I called Kitty and noticed that she was not around. I looked everywhere, and after a great deal of difficulty, I discovered her under an old box.







"And right around her there were five little, tiny kittens. Four were white and one was of dark, gray color. They were tiny, like little rats without any skin. And soft like a little ball. And the mother cat was softly licking the newcomers with great earnest affection.

"For a few days the mother cat did not come out to have her meals, instead she stayed with the little kittens and took care of them with great attention, and it was on the third day after the kittens were born that the mother cat came out and took some nourishment. I went over to the place where the little kittens were sleeping and I found out that one of them was dead. I did not feel well, as it reminded me somewhat of the dead of my first child. And I was sad and alone and I did not feel well at all.

"And the next day another one of the kittens passed away, and on the fourth day of life one of the little kittens was carried away. That is, the <sup>head</sup> ~~cat~~ of the little cat was carried away, and only the body of the cat was left. There was blood all around and only the lower half of the body was lying around. The other little cats were staring at the body and little knowing what it was all about.

"Kitty was alone, and she did not seem to understand at all, and she was alone and sad. But in the night she cried and looked all around for them, but she could not find them. And she cried. Actually cried. And she reminded me of Sarah and I, all of a sudden, thought back about the dead child and Sarah, and I was lonely all night long. Yes, my boy, I was lonely all night long.

"I dreamt and I worried.



"Only two out of the five kittens lived. One was the dark gray and the other was a snow-white little kitten. It gave me pleasure to see <sup>Kitty</sup> so happy and gay, no worry or sadness. In a few days Kitty had completely forgotten about the other three little kittens. She devoted her entire time in caring for the two live ones. And the baby kittens grew up fast and strong. In three or four weeks' time they were trying to come out into the yard to walk. But their little legs were not strong, and sometimes when I had time I would spend hours watching them.

"The days flew by quickly. The kittens were now strong and full and they were able to run, walk, jump, and roam around the spacious back yard. The heavy feeling in my heart left me, the more I watched the little cats. Kitty was happy too as I could see her lying in the sun silently admiring the kittens.

"But it seems that nature was not satisfied with the sadness she showered upon me, my boy. She had to take the little kittens away too.

"It happened in the early dawn.

"The two little kittens were always in the habit of playing around together, sleeping together, in fact, everywhere that one went, the other was sure to follow. There was an old box right next to the garbage can where the mother cat slept with her kittens. This was the favorite place of the little kittens too. One day in the early morning the garbage man came to collect the refuse. Now the two little kittens were so small cuddled together while sleeping that the garbage man did not notice them. It was in the early dawn, and the yard was very dark, as no sunlight could come into the yard until late in the afternoon.







"Well, the man was busily attending to his job that he did not know that right under his heavy boots there were two little kittens sleeping not knowing the fate that was hovering right above them. They were instantly killed by the heavy footsteps of the man.

"Later when I woke up, I saw the crushed bodies of the the dead kittens. My boy, you could not have imagined the grieve that I suffered at that torturous moment. It brought memories of my second son.

"When poor Sarah lost the first child she always longed for another to ease her suffering heart, a boy or a girl, it did not matter, only a child she must have. Two years after after the death of our first child, we were expecting the stork again. The time drew near for the child's appearance in this world. Sarah was extremely happy and often she spoke to me, 'Wallace, we must do everything to see that the child has the best opportunities in life.' She was a darling, my Sarah.

"It was at night at about eleven o'clock when she gave birth to a son, a strong lusty son. Sarah was very happy, I could tell. And seeing her, I was glad too.

"Well, that one lived. A month afterwards we took him into the open air and I was surprised at the golden sheen in his blonde hair. He was a handsome little lad, one that even an old grouch could love. Sarah was so taken up with the affairs of the child that she completely forgot about the other child. I was glad for Sarah. After what she suffered, it was about time that she deserved some happiness. And now she had found it. The months that ensued were the happiest in our whole lives."



"By this time we had named the little child Monty. Sarah liked the name very much. I must say that Monty grew up to be a very handsome lad, one which other parents admired whenever they saw him. Light and color came back into Sarah eyes as the baby grew older. I was happy, too. 'Now,' I said, 'nature had given me a son again, only this time, a live one.' You could not really imagine what happiness I enjoyed, my boy. When you grow older you will realize how much joy a little child could bring to a person.

*Monty*  
 "Little learned to walk when he was about fifteen months old. And my Sarah and I we had a great time teaching him and watching him. Often he would fall and my Sarah would pick him up and ~~hugged~~ him with darling affection.

"Indeed I was a proud father. Monty was everything that a person could wished for in a son. He had the brightest blue eyes that I have ever seen in a person. And hair like sparkling gold.

"Sarah was so devoted to the child that she had very little time to do any other thing. Whatever time she had she spent it with the child. Well, my boy, the years passed, quick and fast. Monty was a little young lad. He was fond of me and Sarah, but especially his mother, as she had devoted so much of her time to him. In fact, all of her time.

"And again tragedy entered our happy lives again. It seemed that my Sarah and I could not have happiness. Bitterness, heart-aches, and sorrow we more than know. Occasionally in dark days we felt sparks of real happiness, short-lived and not permanent. It came like lighting, then disappeared never to be recaptured again. It just faded like a lingering dream that lingered no more.



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

1100 EAST 58TH STREET, CHICAGO, ILL. 60637

TELEPHONE (312) 937-1234

FAX (312) 937-1235

WWW.CHICAGOEDU.EDU

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"When Monty grew up, his bright intelligence developed ~~in~~ in the same degree. At three, his vocabulary of words was amazing. He was so much brighter than other children of his age, that it was unbelievable.

"We had a nice backyard at the back of our house, sunny, cozy, just the sort of a yard necessary for the health of a young child. We used to take little Monty out into the yard and let him stay there by himself. Often we would leave him out there by himself. And when we went out to fetch him, we would find him playing in a little corner or else quietly sleeping in his little couch.

"One afternoon Sarah had guest at the house, and she let little Monty stayed out in the yard alone. Since it was very safe for him, Sarah had no fear that any trouble would come to him. She went into the house, and Monty was left out in the sunlight doing whatever he wished to do.

"An hour passed, but Sarah did not notice since she was so busy with her guests. Suddenly from outside the streets came the screeching of brakes and the terrific scream of a woman. Sarah went quickly to the window just in time to see a small automobile madly rushing away into the distance. And there on the streets was the bloody body of Monty. Words cannot describe the horror that overtook Sarah at that moment. The blood went away from her face, and she was so chilled by the fear that she was frozen like ice. The guests noticed that Sarah lingered at the window and one of them said, 'Why, Sarah, what is it?' She did not answer.

"They saw her dropped to the floor then. She had fainted.

"I was coming home from work just then, and when I turned the corner I noticed that there was many people crowding near our





house, pushing, shuffling. I did not know what it was all about. I hastened my footsteps, then I saw. My own Monty was there. His head was crushed so badly that I could hardly recognize it myself. I gasped in horror. I could not believe that it had happened. It must be a dream, I thought. But it isn't. There on the road dripping with blood, my own blood, was little Monty. I knelt down and carefully took the body into the back yard. I noticed that the lock in the gate had been broken and I wondered who had broken it. This gate was never opened.

"I cried just like a child, for I loved my Monty very well. I went into the house and Sarah had recovered somewhat from her daze. In the meantime a doctor had come and was attending her. In a weak voice she yelled, 'Monty! Monty!' And she fainted again. I could not control myself any longer. I completely break down from my usual self control.

"Sarah fell sick after that. For a time I thought that perhaps she might die, as she had become so weak and pale. But she recovered. But she was destined to suffer a tragic death later in life.

"Yes, my boy, it is because of the death of those two kittens that brought all this back so vividly now. It happened so many years ago, but I could see it. My Sarah.

"Kitty missed the two little kittens. She made a frantic search for them, but I had buried them under the earth in the yard. I could see from then on the sadness in Kitty's eyes. But a greater sadness I endured. For the incident brought back afresh my memories of my tragic life. Kitty and I roamed around the house as though we were in a dream not fully awake.

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"However, fortunately, all things has an end. In a few days Kitty was not so sad and moody anymore; she was her old self again. And I, I tried to forget, and after great difficulty, very great difficulty, I managed to forget and become a little gay again.

"And before I knew it, Kitty was again to become a mother. She went to the little old box under the stairs, and it was there that I discovered her some time later.

"This time she gave birth to three kittens. All of them were of a dark gray color with a slight trace of white. I left the little kittens alone. That night there was a heavy, rolling rain. In the morning I found them completely drenched by the cold rain. They died, all of them.

"It was then, at this time, that I found out how much the same the life of this mother cat compared with that of my Sarah. It was so similiar that I did not know whether it was chance or fate that threw Kitty and I together.

"It was five years ago that my Sarah passed away, five long years to me, like a century. My boy, do you know how she die?

"When Monty was gone, Sarah was lonely. Many years later she was again to become a mother. This time she had twins, two boys. But after the children were born, she died. She was weak and could not survive the ordeal, as she had not enough strength and to add to the tragedy of the whole thing, my boys died too. I lost my last sons and also my Sarah. Could life be so cruel? It could, I found out.

"Now today I am like a hermit. Alone, apart, away from the world outside.

"My boy, look at those poor kittens. Do they not quickly



bring the tears rushing to your eyes. And look at Kitty. Look at that sad expression on her face. The kittens are dead. But the mother lives on. At least I am spared my cat.

"This is the reason why I am so sullen today, my boy. I keep thinking of my Sarah and my sons that never live. I am old and grey. My cat is my only friend. Now you understand, my boy." He stopped. For a moment neither of us could speak.

Yes, life is tragic indeed. I looked at the dead kittens and the old man. Out of this backyard is emerged this story of devotion, of love, of tender bliss, yet tragic, sad, and poignant. I continued to cry and cry, unashamed, unabashed. I have heard and seen a piece of life so real, so very heart-breaking that for a moment I know how very fortunate I am to be alive, living in this world, awake, alive.

My face is wet, dripping with tears, but I am alive and this is all that matters.





Jonh Leyim (Jon Lee)  
334 Fifth Street  
Oakland, Calif.

short story

### Air for a Lonely Night

The night was very warm, being a late July evening in the summer, and they were driving around the lake, enjoying the night air, watching the water of the simmering lake. The cool summer breeze gushed into the compartment of the automobile, and the car raced along at a rapid rate. They had passed the noisy part of the city, and now they suddenly found themselves in the more remote part of the city, where it was quiet and dark.

The dark trees loomed up, silhouetted against the dark sky in artistic designs. The automobiles turned into a narrow lane.

"Is the place near here?" one of the young men spoke, leaning his head out the window.

"Just about here," the one called Jim replied.

"You come here often, Jim?" Bob demanded.

"Sometimes, Bob," Jim said.

The automobile turned right, came upon a narrow path where it was very dark. On both sides of the lane the two young men could see cars parked near the grass. In every car there was a young couple, petting and kissing, unconscious that they were being watched.

"So this is Lover's Lane!" Bob said.

Jim laughed gaily, "You haven't seen anything until you've been to Lover's Lane."

Jim drove the car slowly, and Bob had ample time to see what was going on in the different cars.

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"You look more often, like" Bob began to

"Sometimes, Bob," the girl said.

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the men could not have been more than twenty. In every

"Keep your eyes open," Jim told Bob, "and you'll see plenty."

Bob looked out of the car's window, and peered out into the pitch-black darkness. The automobile's lights threw a glaring and bright light in the narrow lane.

Out in the distance, the black water of the lake shone like a glittering sapphire.

Looking out into the other cars, Bob could see shadows merging into one, lips pressed against lips, and indistinguished forms which blended into the darkness of the night.

"Boy! They're having the time of their lives."

"See anything?" Jim asked.

"Plenty."

The car was going slowly. Jim drove slowly, carefully, alert, knowing that the narrow lane was filled with dangerous ~~curves~~ <sup>curves</sup>, and the slightest misshap might throw the car against an oncoming automobile. The tall trees along the edge of the lake were sharply etched against the evening sky, and the breeze was refreshingly exhilarating.

"Do you always find so many people here?" Bob asked, while straining his eyes into a nearby car.

"The young folks come here especially in good weather like this," Jim remarked.

The ~~automobile~~ <sup>automobile</sup> turned into the main street.

"I've never seen so many people kissing and petting in my life," Bob said.

"Sometimes there are even more people than tonight," Jim said.





The automobile picked up speed again, the uncomfortable hotness of the day seemed to fade away suddenly, and the gentle breeze~~d~~ blew in from the rippling lake.

The two drove on in silence.

Bob lit a cigarette.

"Ever been to the lane with a girl of your own?" he asked his friend.

"Of course I have," Jim laughed.

"What did you do?"

"Just like the rest of them," he said.

"I don't wonder."

They drove on until they reached the noisy part of the city once again.

"Let's go around once more," Bob said.

"All right."

Jim turned the car toward the lake again, and the familiar sights came forth once again.

"The lake is beautiful in the night."

"Sure," Jim said.

"I remember last Christmas when they had that big tree out in the middle of the lake, and it was sure swell."

"I remember it too. They're going to have a tree out there every year."

"That would be fine," Bob said.

"It sure is," Jim said.

"The lake is a romantic place at night."

"Yes."

"Let's get down and see what the lake~~s~~ is like."

"All right," Jim responded.



Jim drove the car toward Lover's Lane again, and the cars were so densely parked that there was no available space for the two boys to park.

The headlights shone into the car in front, and for a fleeting instance Bob saw a young couple in a savage embrace.

"Jesus Christ!" he ejaculated.

"What's the matter?"

"Just saw something," Bob said, turning his head to see again.

"You get used to it."

"Boy! This sure is a swell place to spend an evening," Bob chuckled.

Jim drove the car slowly.

A car was going in front, and Jim directed his car toward the empty space.

"Come on, let's get out," he said.

The two boys got out of the car, walked across the dark grass, and came down upon a sandy walk. It was dark down near the lake, but the two boys could see the water of the lake moving toward the direction of the estuary. All along the edge of the lake a long sandy road stretched unendingly far into the distance. Thick shubbery and vines mingled together into thick masses of shadows. The long rows of lanterns and lights glittered through the tall trees and threw its reflection into the water.

"Let's walk a little way," Bob suggested.

"Okay with me," Jim said.

They walked slowly along the sandy walk, breathing deeply

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and inhaling the fresh night air. Far into the distance they could see the tall buildings of the business district looming up. It was very quiet, only the sound of the water broke the silence.

The lights all around the lake made a glittering pattern, like a long string of fireflies strung up against the sky. The two boys walked a little way, the cool wind blew into their faces.

"I wish we can get a candee now," Bob said.

"It's too late."

"I guess we better turn back," Bob suggested.

"All right," Jim said.

They turned around and headed toward their car.

Suddenly in the nearby region they could hear some strange mysterious sounds.

"Did you hear that?" Bob demanded.

"I heard something, but don't know what," Jim said.

They walked on toward their automobile, and through the thick mass of shubbery they could see the cars parked along the lake.

"I was sure I heard something," Bob said again.

They peered out into the darkness, but the two young man could not distinguish anything.

A low moan, strange and mysterious, came over the night and then lost itself in the whispering breeze.

The two young men went toward the spot where the sounds seemed to come from, but they could not hear anything, only the water of the lake, and the sound of the light wind. It



was too obscure to see into the dark shubbery.

"What do you think it is?" Bob asked.

"I'm sure it was the sound of a human voice," Jim said.

He lit a match and went forward, but the wind blew the match out, and finally the two gave up looking. Then a series of moans seemed to come over the night.

The two boys went quickly, walking faster.

"This is mysterious," Bob said.

"Where did the sounds come ffrom?"

"I'm sure it's near here."

"Maybe we better look around some more," Jim said.

Bob lit a match, and looked at his watch.

"We better go back to the car," Bob said.

"I guess we better."

They walked across the grass once more, and headed toward their automobile.

Suddenly there were ~~###~~ sounds of running footsteps, very lkght, running across the grass, but both boys heard them.

"I'm sure I saw a shadow running across."

"I didn't see anything, but I heard someone running," Jim answered.

Closeby something was struggling behind some bushes. The two boys stopped and listened. There was a sob, and the faint sound of someone calling for help. Jim and Bob came forward, straining their eyes to see into the darkness.

A young girl's head appeared, then two hands, strained with dried blood.

"I'm sure I'll be here,"  
 "Where did the woman come from?"  
 "This is a woman," he said.  
 "I'm sure I'll be here."

"I'm sure I'll be here,"  
 "I'm sure I'll be here."

"I'm sure I'll be here,"

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"I'm sure I'll be here,"



Jim came forward, shocked.

The girl looked up, frozen with fright.

Bob kneeled down.

"Are you all right?" he asked.

The girl gasped out, "Take me away."

Bob turned to Jim. "What shall we do?"

"We can't leave her here," Jim said.

"What happened?" he asked.

The girl did not speak.

"We better take you someplace where they can fix you up."

The girl sat up, startled, frightened.

"Don't. Take me home, I don't live far from here."

"Are you sure you are all right?"

The girl nodded slowly.

Jim carried the girl into the car. The automobile drove out into the bright street. The car was going fast now.

Five minute later they stopped in front of a house. Just at that moment Bob cried out from behind, "She's fainted!" The girl was crumpled up in a heap on the automobile's floor.

Jim jumped out of the car and opened the door. Bob gently took up the wounded girl in his arms and came out. He took her up the steps, and Jim rang ~~the~~ the bell.

Ah middle aged woman opened the door. Seeing the girl in the boy's arms she was unable to speak.

"What happened?" she finally managed to gasp out.

Bob went toward the couch, and laid the girl there.

The mother went into the kitchen, and brought out a

"What happened?" he asked.

The girl told him.

"I saw a man go into the house and come out with a bag and a box."

"Don't worry, I'll go and see what's going on."

"I'll go with you," he said.

Jim carried the girl into the car and the engine started.

Into the night he drove. The car was fast and the road was good.

He drove on for some time and then he saw a light in the distance.

"That must be a house," he said.

He drove on for some time and then he saw a light in the distance.

He drove on for some time and then he saw a light in the distance.

He drove on for some time and then he saw a light in the distance.

He drove on for some time and then he saw a light in the distance.

glass of water. She pressed the glass of water to her daughter's lips.

Bob and Jim stood there, unable to say anything.

The mother took up the phone, and called a doctor.

"Tell me everything," she said to the boys.

Bob related everything to the mother.

"My poor Mary," the mother said.

The door bell rang, and Bob got up to open the door.

The doctor came in and said, "Anything wrong, Mrs. Bradley?"

The mother pointed to the girl on the couch.

Bob and Jim went out into the hall.

"Do you think it's anything serious?"

"Yes," Jim said, "she's been--"

"You mean she's--"

~~"My dear girl--"~~ Bob broke in suddenly.

"Yes."

"It's terrible."

"I know," Jim said.

The doctor came out.

"I feel it necessary to call the police and notify them of what happened. If you two young men don't mind, I would like you to remain and answer some questions."

"We would be glad to help out in any way possible," Jim told the doctor.

Mary was conscious now, looking very pale.

The officers arrived soon.

Mrs. Bradley said, "I think it is better for all concerned that we mention no names. The boys have been very





kind to bring Mary back here."

Jim said, "If you are all through with us, we would like to go."

The police said, "You may go."

"I want to thank you boys for what you have done," Mrs. Bradley said to the boys.

"We're glad that we were able to help out. I hope that your daughter would be all right soon," Bob told her.

"Goodbye."

"Goodbye," the boys said.

The two boys got into the car and drove home.

"What time is it?" Bob said.

"It almost ten," Jim said.

The car turned up a street.

"Let me down at the corner," Bob said.

"All right."

"Well, I hope that Mary's all right."

"So do I. Good night."

"Good night."

The car drove away, and disappeared down the street.





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